SHADOW GAMBIT

THE CURSED CREW

OFFICIAL ART BOOK & STRATEGY GUIDE

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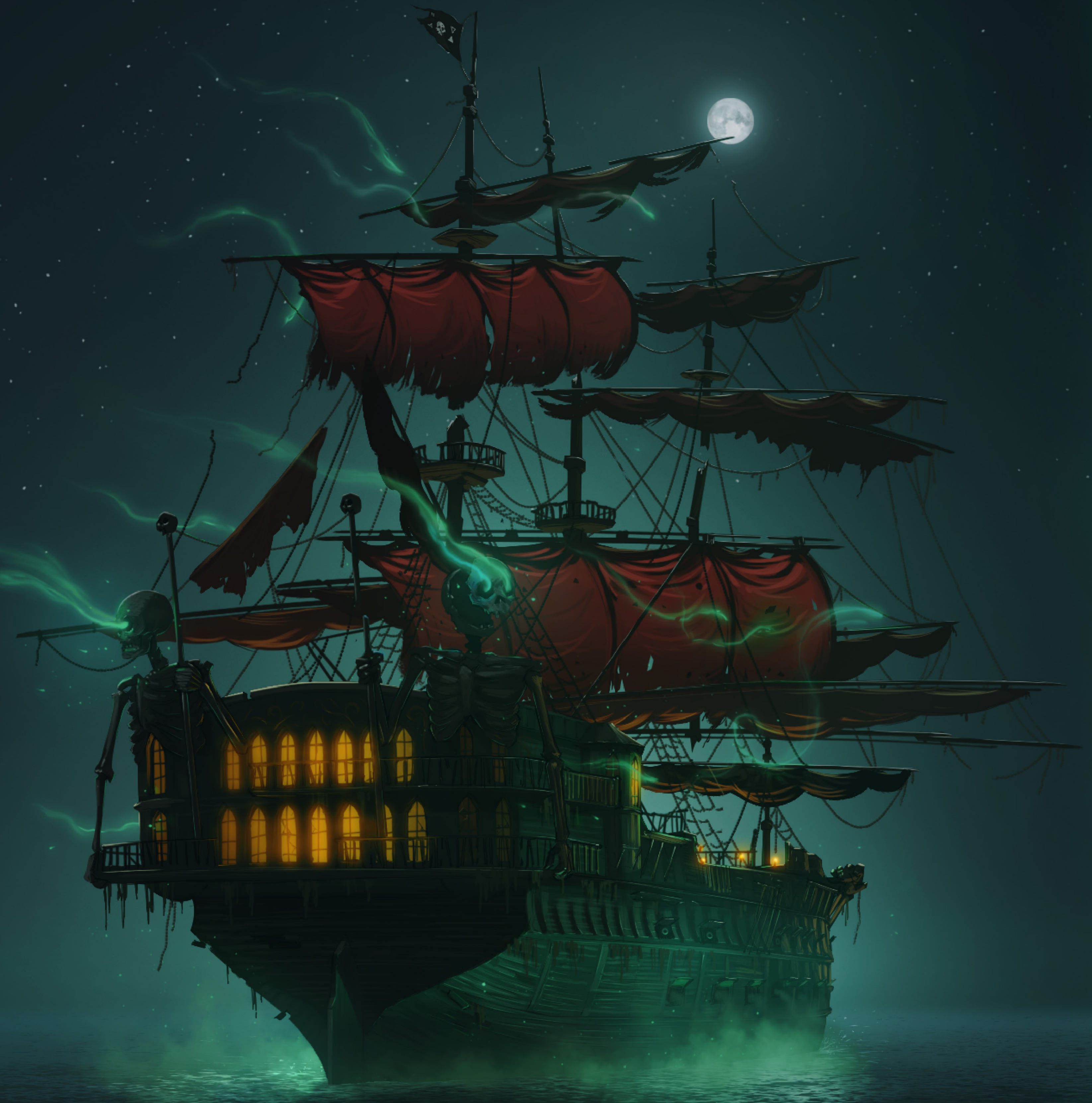


Ahoy, cursed pirate!

Thank you for embarking with us on the thrilling journey of our game, ***Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew***. Your support and enthusiasm have been the wind in our sails, propelling our ship forward while creating this game.

As we reflect upon our previous venture, Desperados III, we remember the challenges we faced in modernizing a particular visual aesthetic. It was an endeavor that required careful balance, blending nostalgia with innovation.

However, with Shadow Gambit, we found ourselves unshackled from the confines of the past, but were tasked to find a fresh art style that would suit our vision.

In our latest game we invite you to set foot upon the deck of the Red Marley, visit beautiful islands and search for the mystical treasure of Captain Mordechai. Our initial goal was to create a game that is a joy to play from the very first steps into the colorful world of **the Lost Caribbean**.

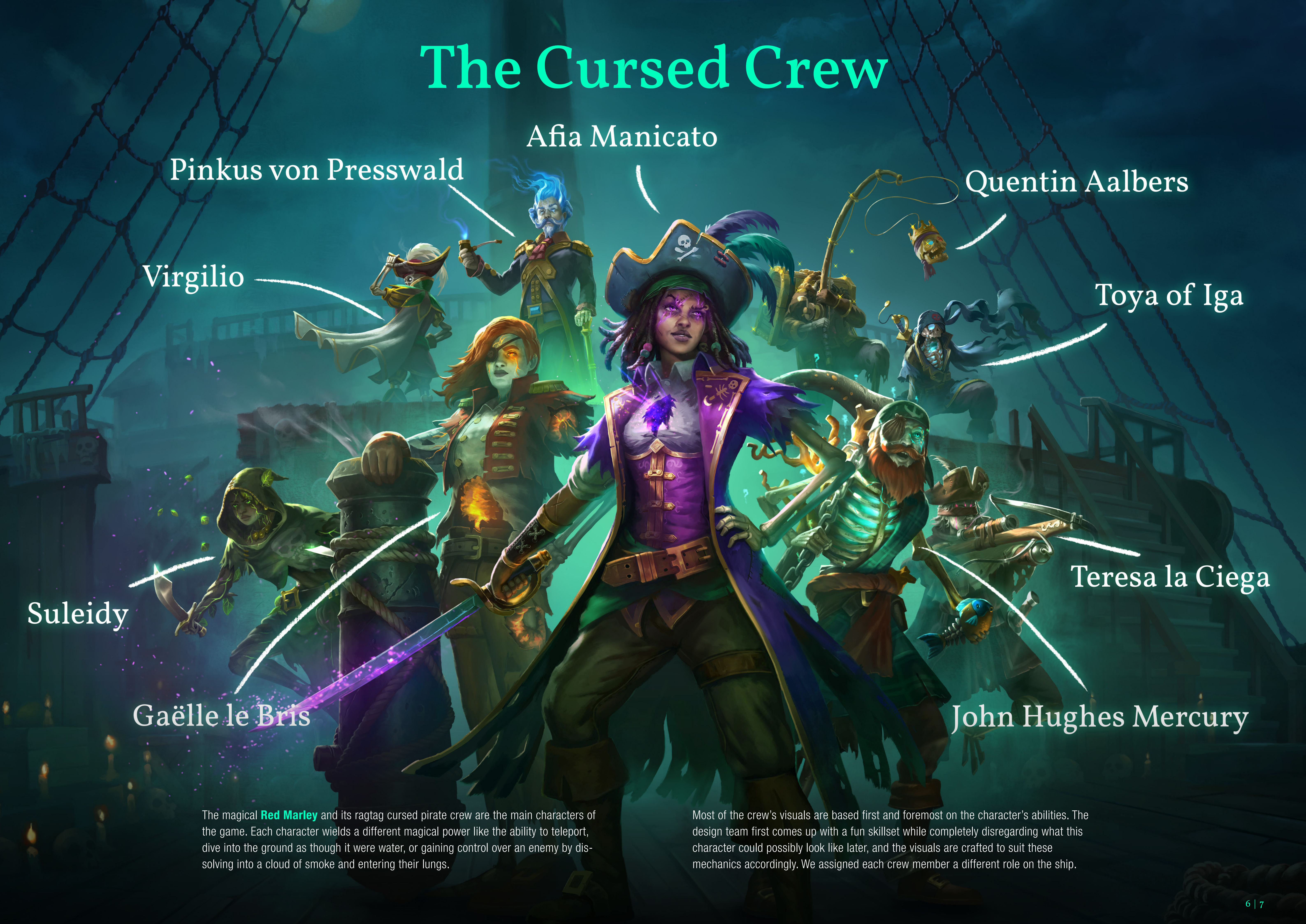
None of this would have been possible without the extraordinary talent and dedication of the artists at Mimimi Games. They have poured their hearts and souls into the creation of **the Timeless Shores**, meticulously crafting every brushstroke and pixel to transport you to our enchanting world.

We hope that within the pages of this art book, you will find inspiration and awe as you delve into the artistic depths of ***Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew***. May it serve as a testament to the creativity and collaborative spirit that drives us, and as a token of our appreciation for your unyielding support.

Fair winds and adventurous spirits,

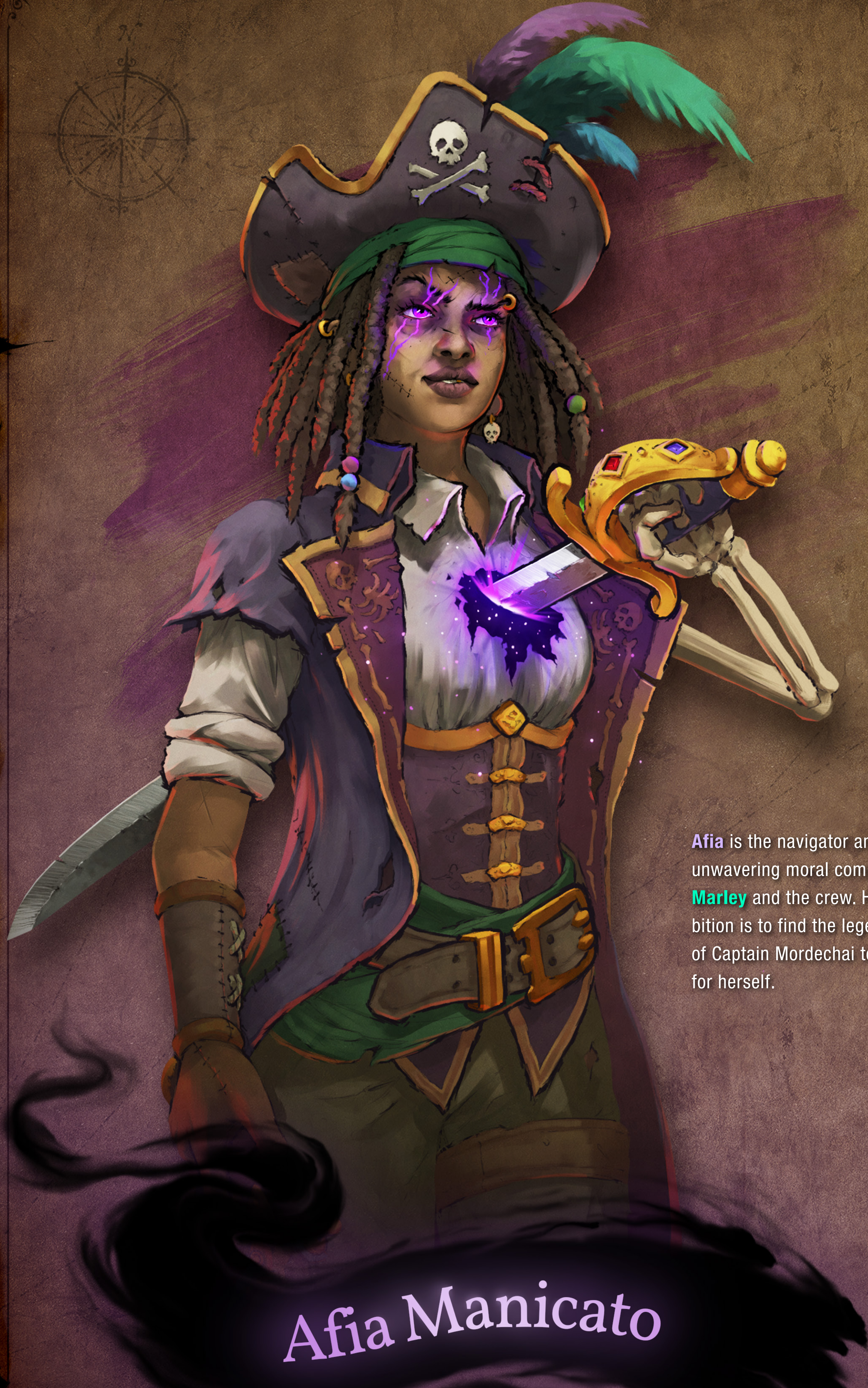
Mathias & Bianca
-Head of Art-

The Cursed Crew


Afia Manicato
Pinkus von Presswald
Quentin Aalbers
Virgilio
Toya of Iga
Suleidy
Teresa la Ciega
Gaëlle le Bris
John Hughes Mercury

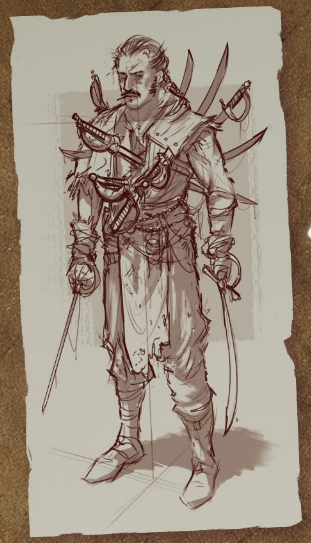
The magical **Red Marley** and its ragtag cursed pirate crew are the main characters of the game. Each character wields a different magical power like the ability to teleport, dive into the ground as though it were water, or gaining control over an enemy by dissolving into a cloud of smoke and entering their lungs.

Most of the crew's visuals are based first and foremost on the character's abilities. The design team first comes up with a fun skillset while completely disregarding what this character could possibly look like later, and the visuals are crafted to suit these mechanics accordingly. We assigned each crew member a different role on the ship.

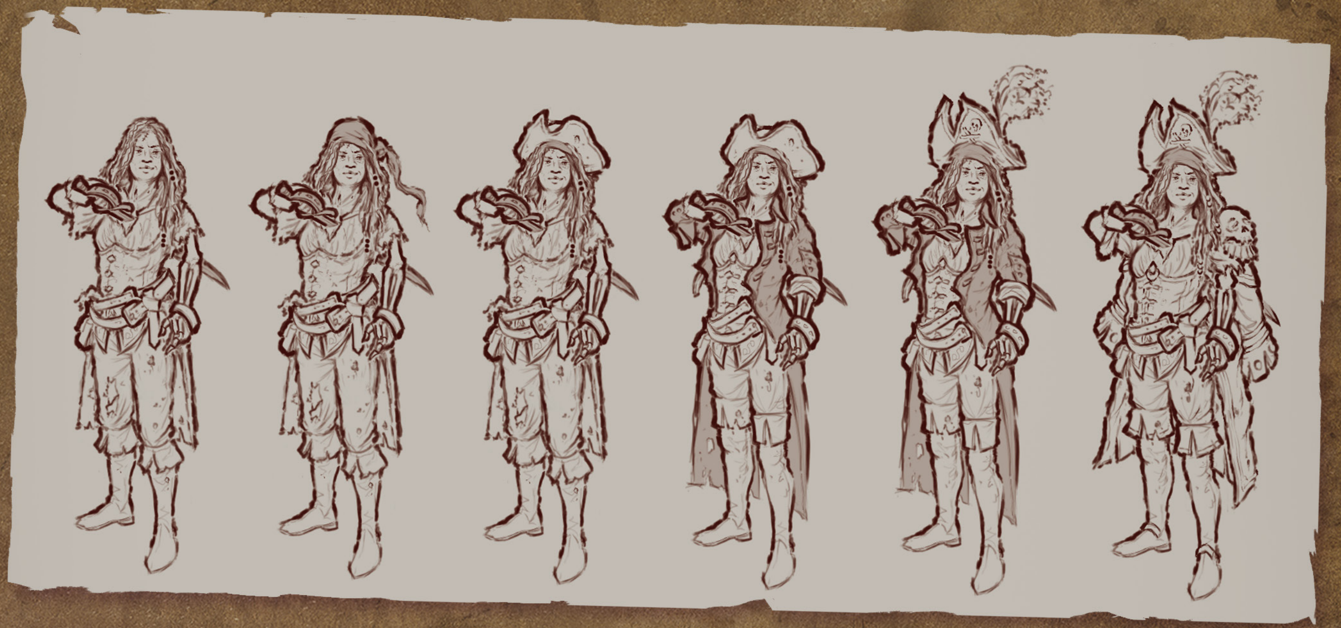


Afia Manicato

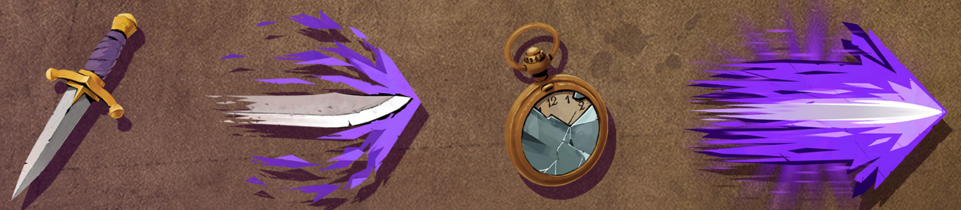
Afia is the navigator and serves as unwavering moral compass for the **Marley** and the crew. Her biggest ambition is to find the legendary treasure of Captain Mordechai to make a name for herself.



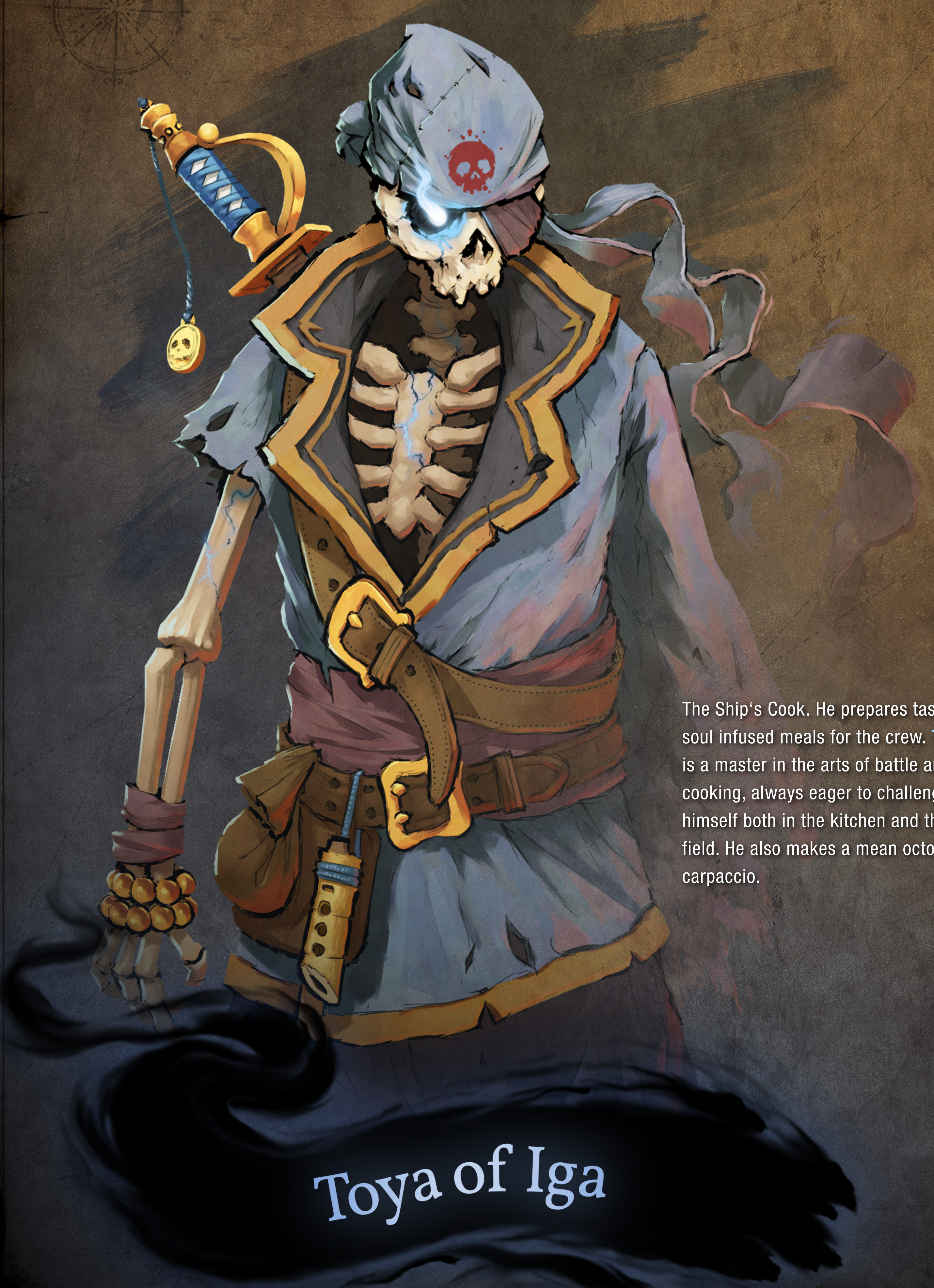
Designing a main character is often the hardest task, and with Afia this was no exception. Loosely inspired by this old concept art of a pirate impaled by multiple swords, we realised that a sword stuck in an otherwise “healthy” character‘s chest is a great way to convey mystery, or more specifically, undeath.



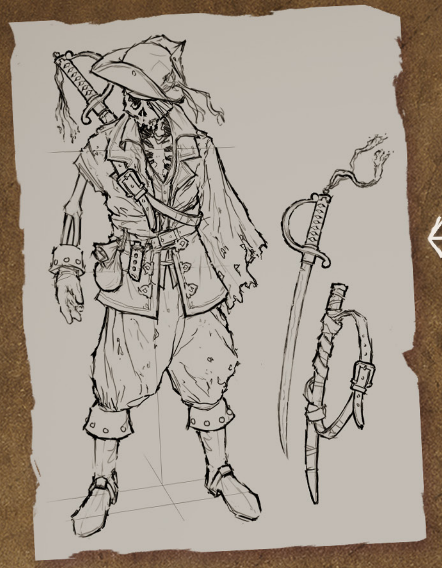
With that out of the way, the biggest struggle remained when designing her actual attire. We were unsure whether to present her as a lowly deckhand or full-fledged captain until we knew what kind of character we wanted to Afia to be. In the end, we gave her a long tattered coat and big pirate hat to show her ambitious goal of becoming a captain one day.



Toya of Iga



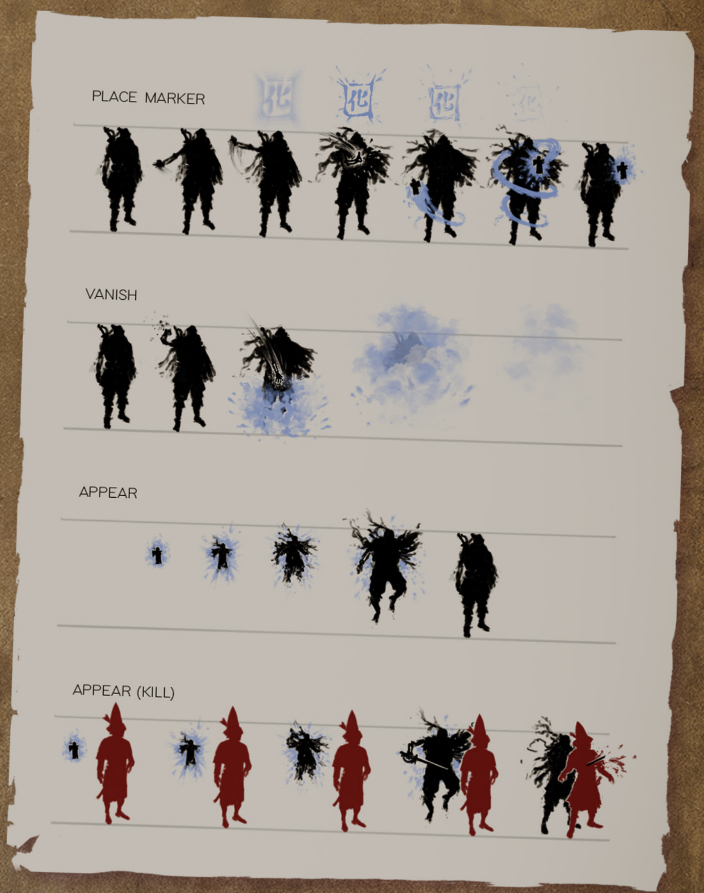
The Ship‘s Cook. He prepares tasty, soul infused meals for the crew. **Toya** is a master in the arts of battle and cooking, always eager to challenge himself both in the kitchen and the field. He also makes a mean octopus carpaccio.

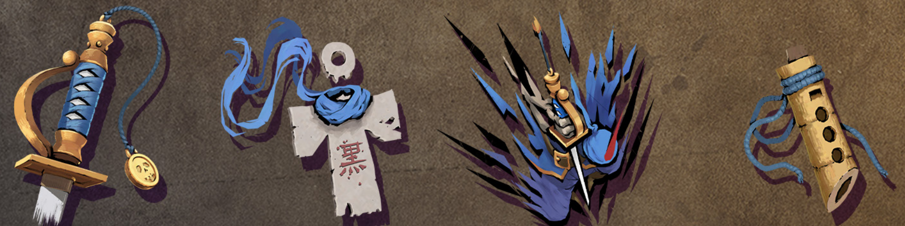


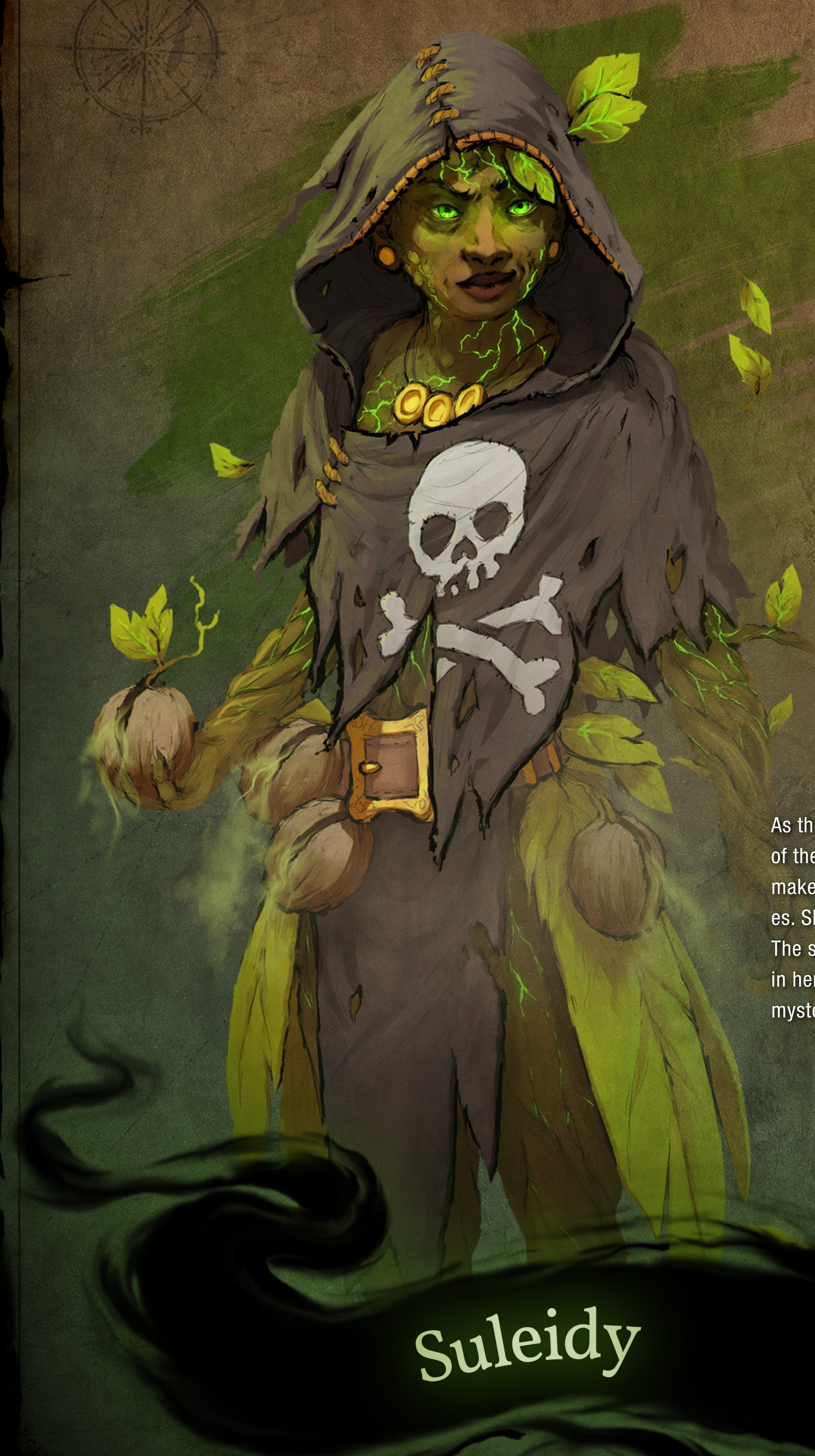
Ironically, one of the first characters we designed for our then-new pirate themed project was **Toya** the Ninja pirate, based in no small part on Shadow Tactics‘ Hayato. It was our big goal to end up with a very international crew consisting of characters from all over the world, and what better country to start with than one we are very familiar with at Mimimi.

Toya‘s visual design itself is a careful mix of ninja elements and pirate elements. The shirt for example is reminiscent of a Japanese Hakama-Shita, as well as a western coat judging by its collar. The sword is a mix of Ninjatō and rapier.

We chopped off his left arm simply because in a game where most playable characters are some type of skeleton, we knew we needed to play around with missing limbs at some point, and a one-armed Ninja just sounds too cool to pass up.

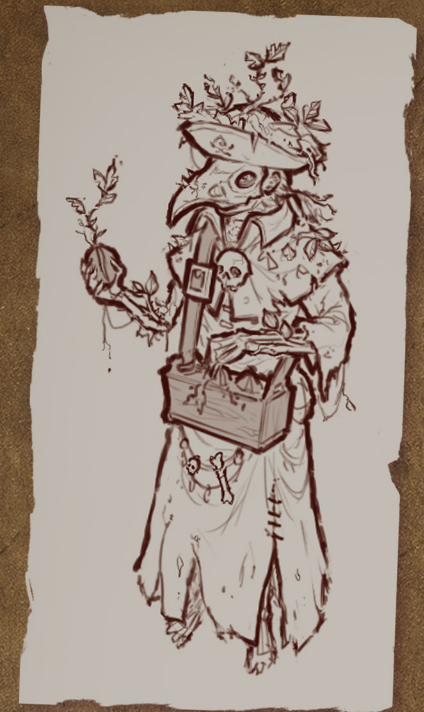






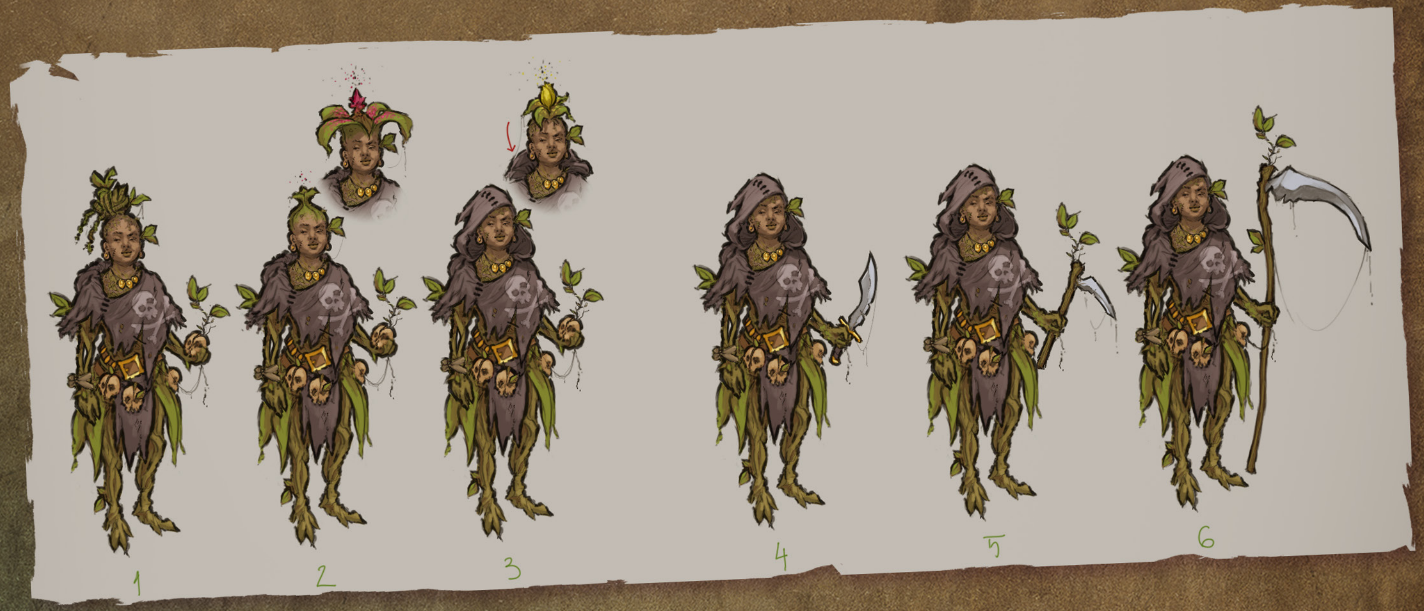
Suleidy

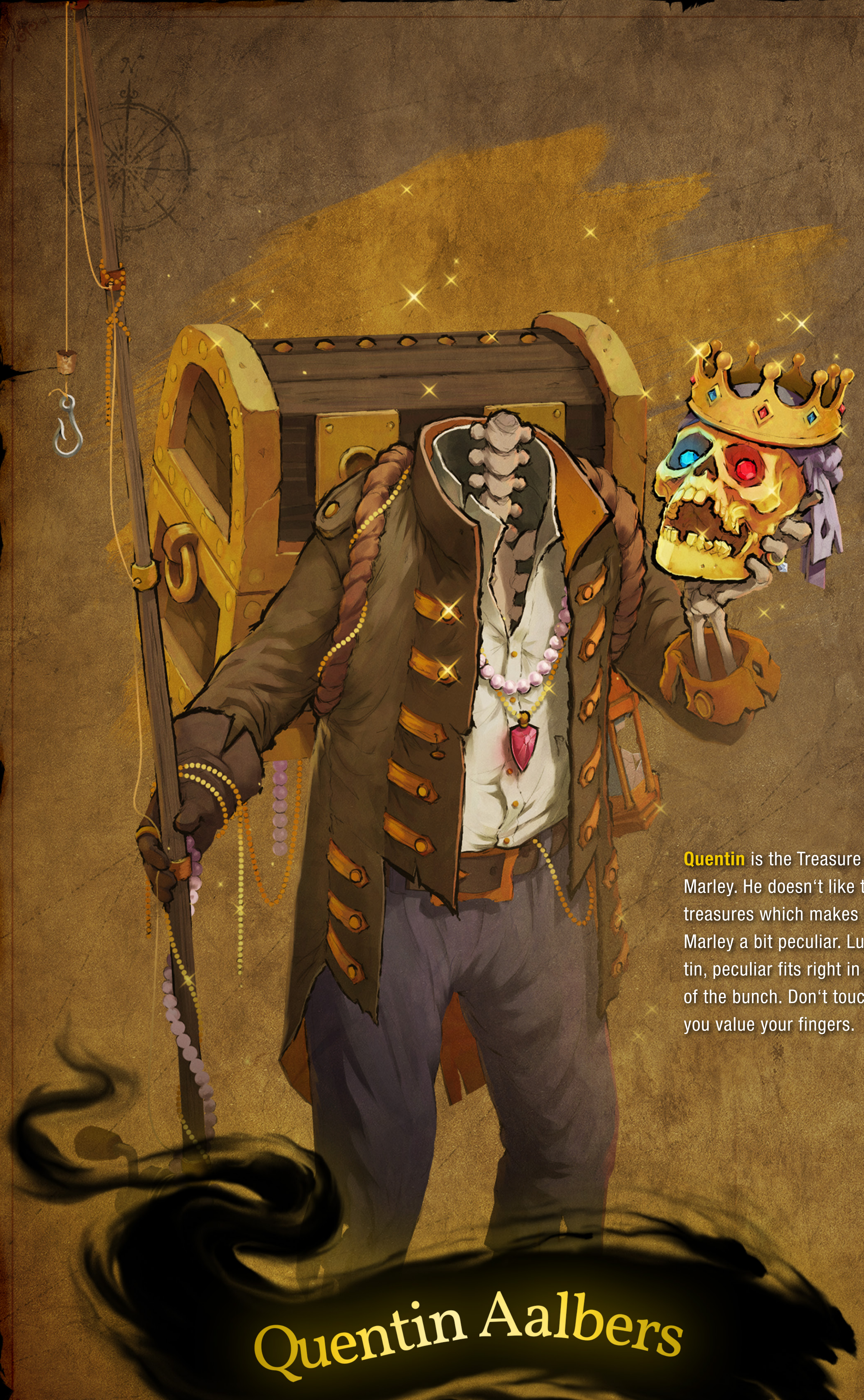
As the ship doctor, she takes care of the **Marley's** skeleton crew and makes cures for nasty soul sicknesses. She's also deadly with a blade. The soul infused plants **Suleidy** grows in her sick bay help her research the mysteries of the Curse.



For a character who can create bushes at will, we always thought of a Researcher/Biologist. We then changed this to a plague doctor to adjust to the pirate setting, before realising that there's still something unique missing. Even covering the plague doctor in plants didn't help.

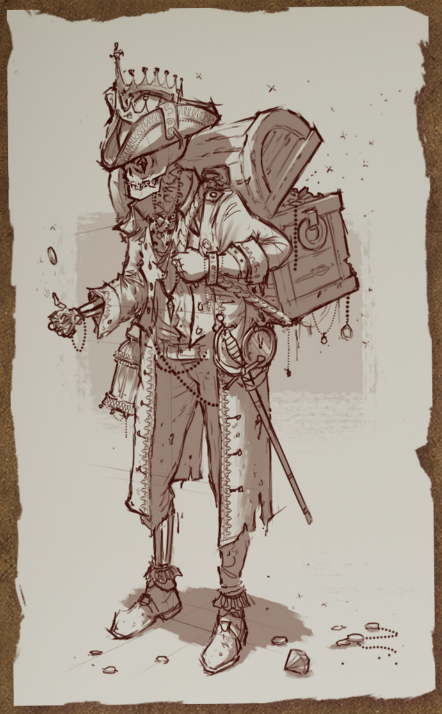
Eventually, since the game is magical in nature and there are almost no rules we need to adhere to when it comes to logic or lore, we created **Suleidy** as a half-plant-half-person with vines and roots as limbs.





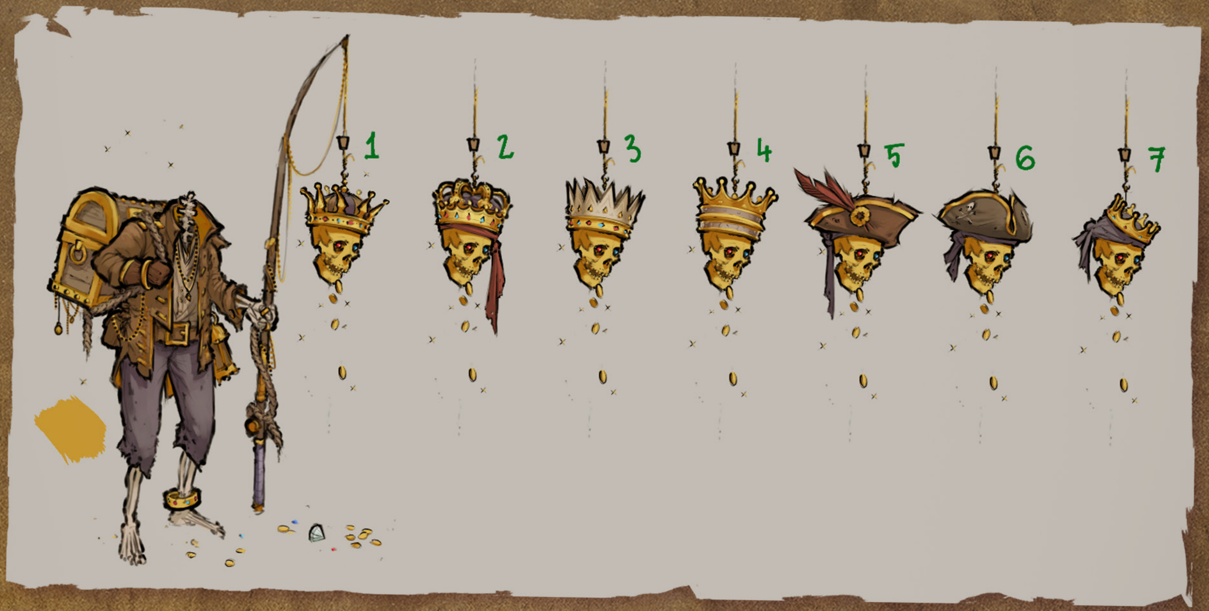
Quentin Aalbers

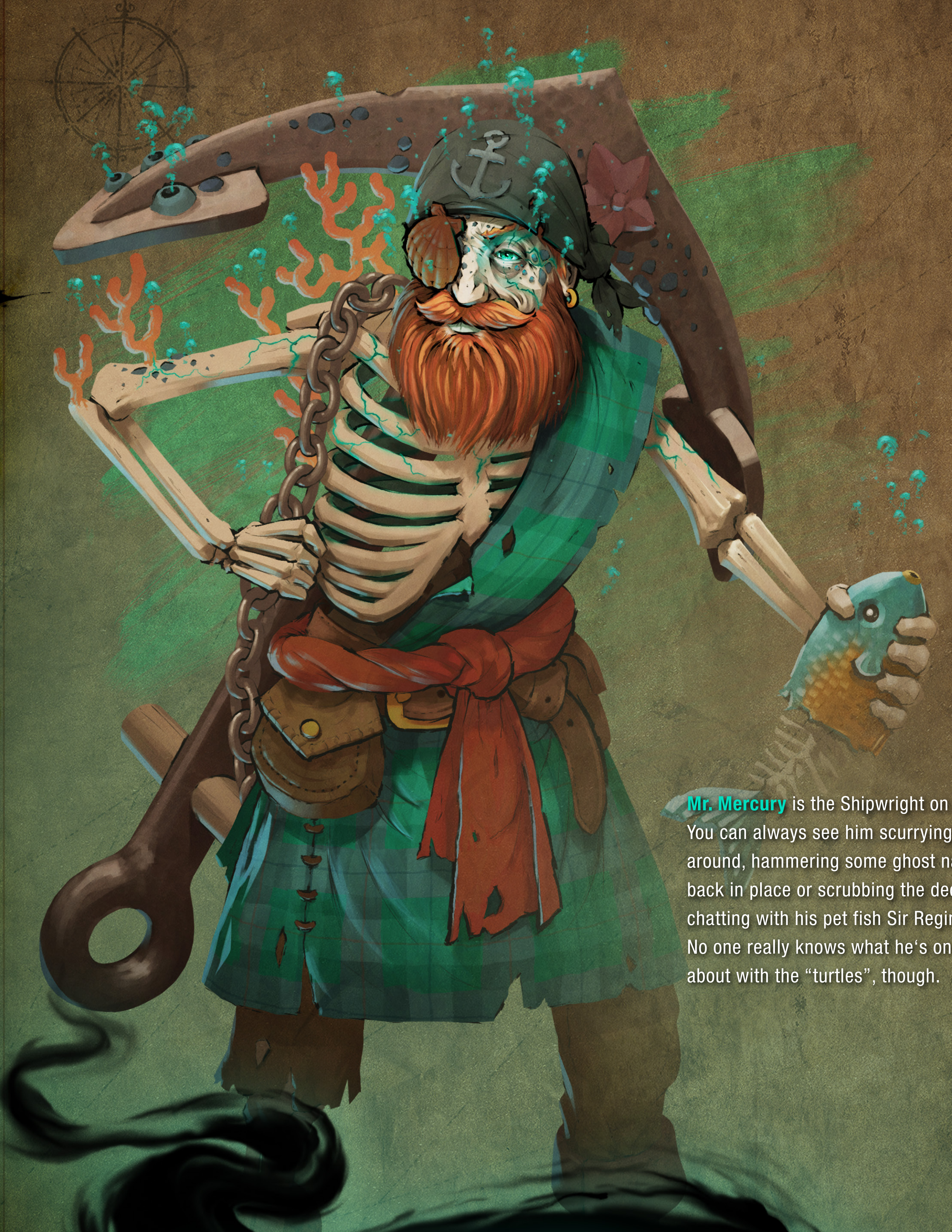
Quentin is the Treasure Hunter on the Marley. He doesn‘t like to share his treasures which makes his role on the Marley a bit peculiar. Lucky for Quentin, peculiar fits right in with the rest of the bunch. Don‘t touch his chest if you value your fingers.



Quentin‘s approach changed from a basic fisherman with a detachable head to a treasure hoarding maniac.

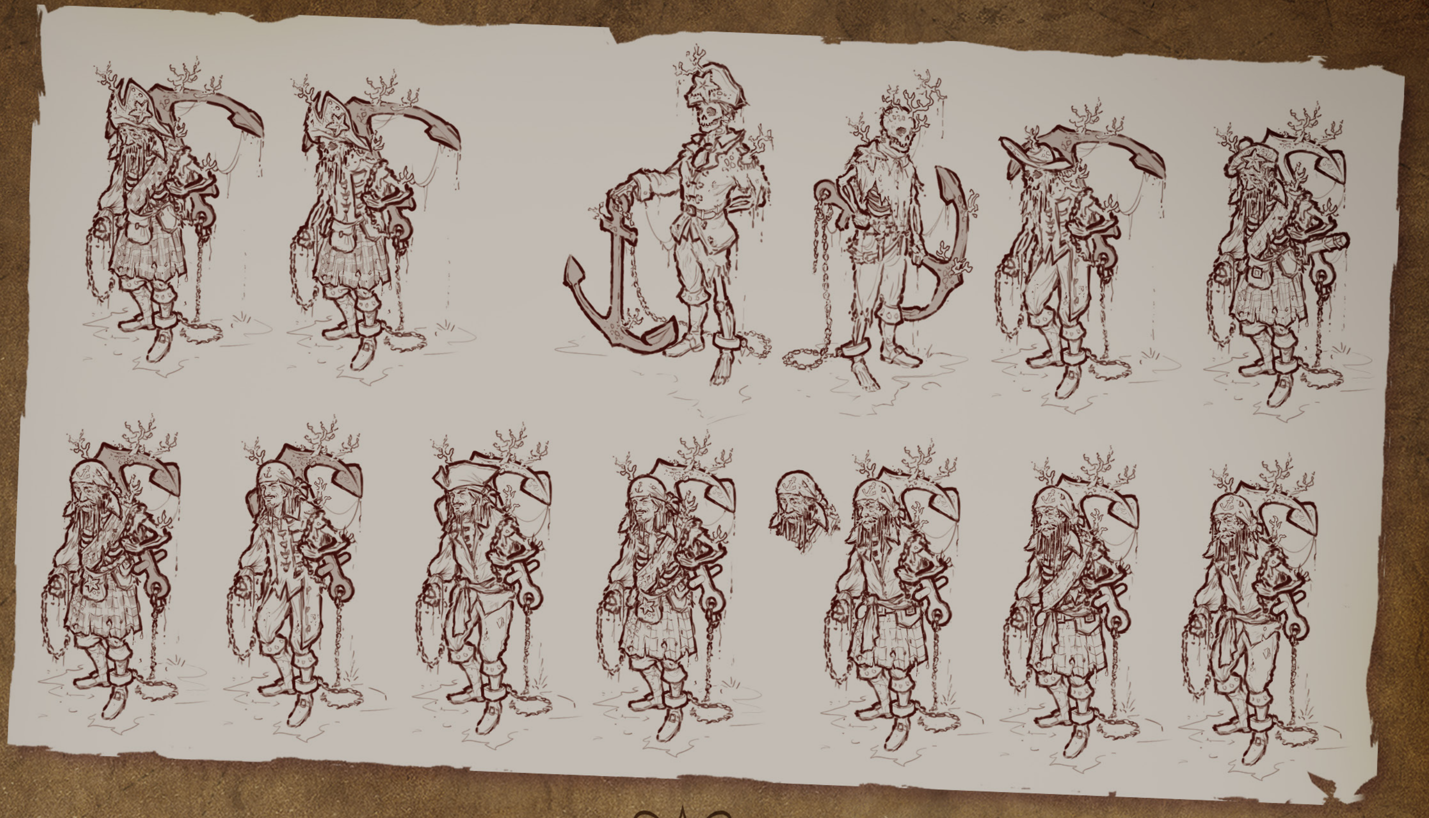
This character is an instance where the visual design gave the gameplay design a little idea: We liked the look of the treasure chest on his back, but the chest didn‘t really have a function in his skillset. That didn‘t feel right. We then changed his skill so that Quentin would immediately hook an enemy body into his treasure chest by using his fishing rod.





John Hughes Mercury

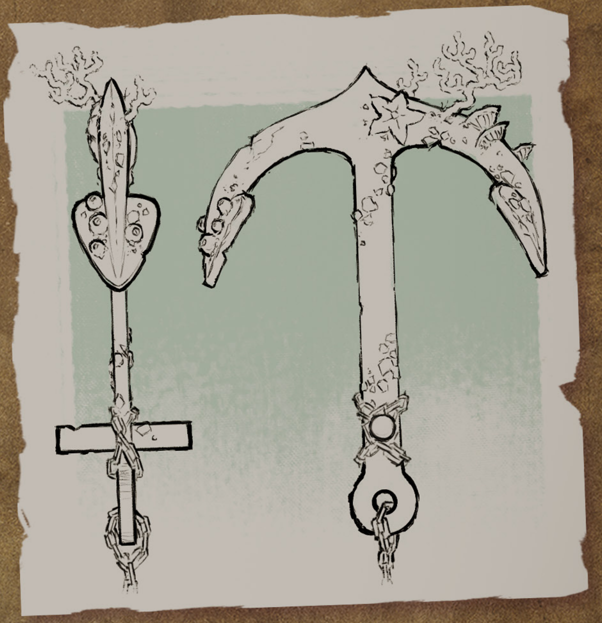
Mr. Mercury is the Shipwright on deck. You can always see him scurrying around, hammering some ghost nails back in place or scrubbing the deck or chatting with his pet fish Sir Reginald. No one really knows what he‘s on about with the “turtles”, though.

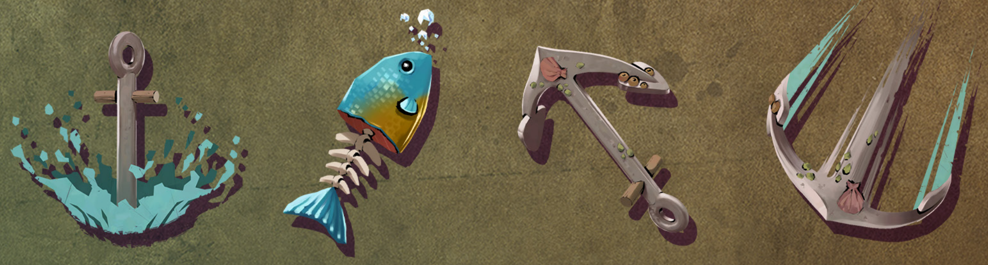


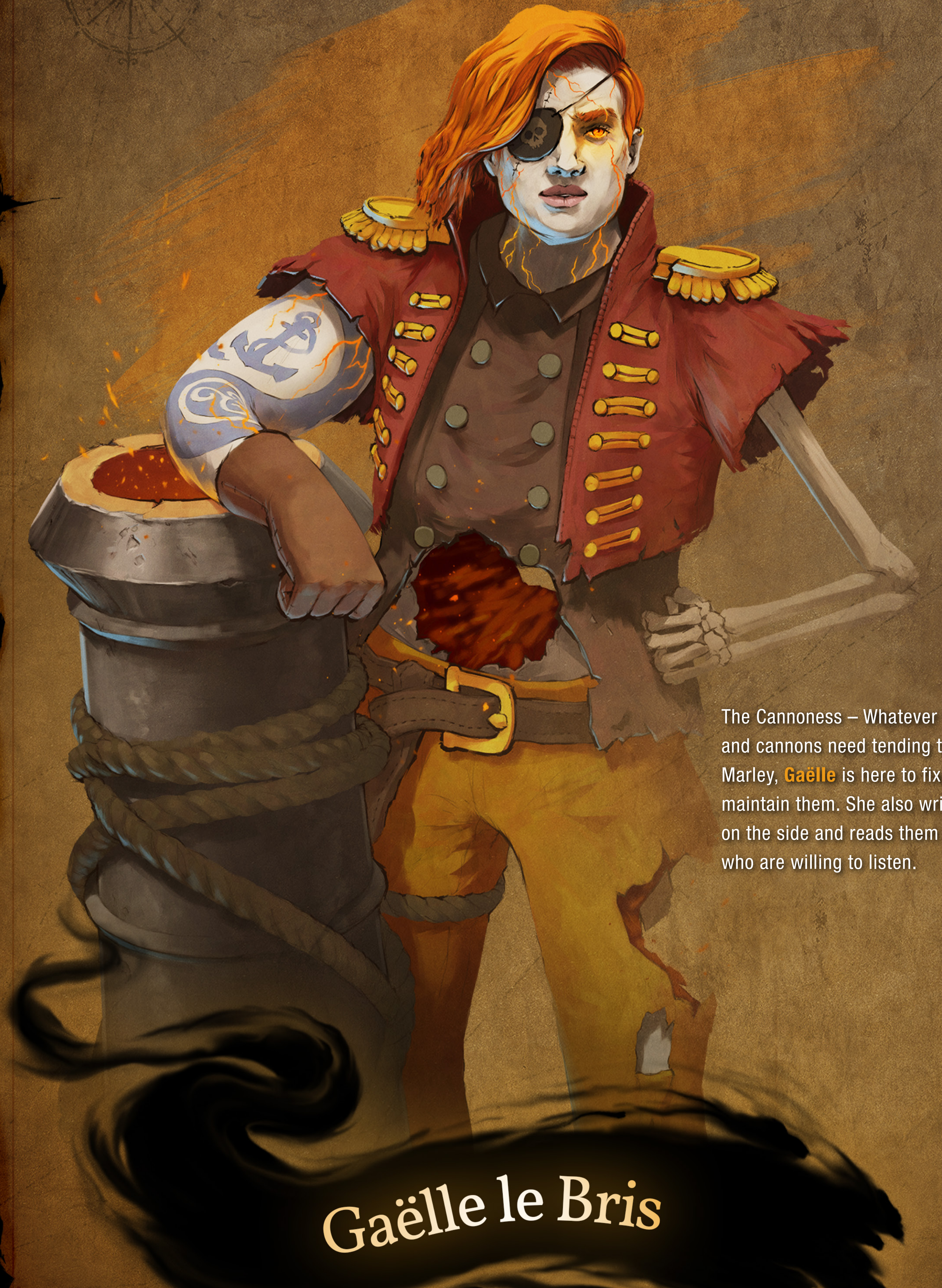
Mr. Mercury was one of those characters for whom we had so many different ideas, we almost couldn‘t pick one.

Ideas from the entire team included a magician/gambler who hides inside a deck of playing cards (this eventually became the visual inspiration for Virgilio), an artist-themed character who uses magic paint to create a portal into another dimension, and many more!

Eventually we combined multiple of our favorite ideas into Mr. Mercury, the Scottish shipwright wielding a huge anchor who can dive into the ground as if it were the sea.

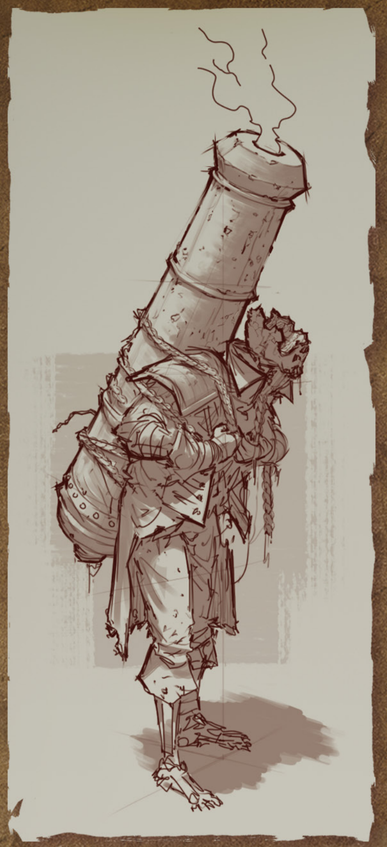






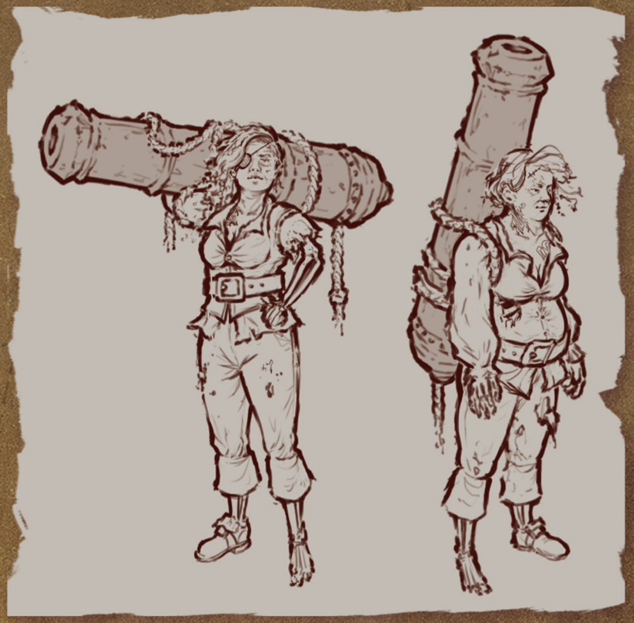
Gaëlle le Bris

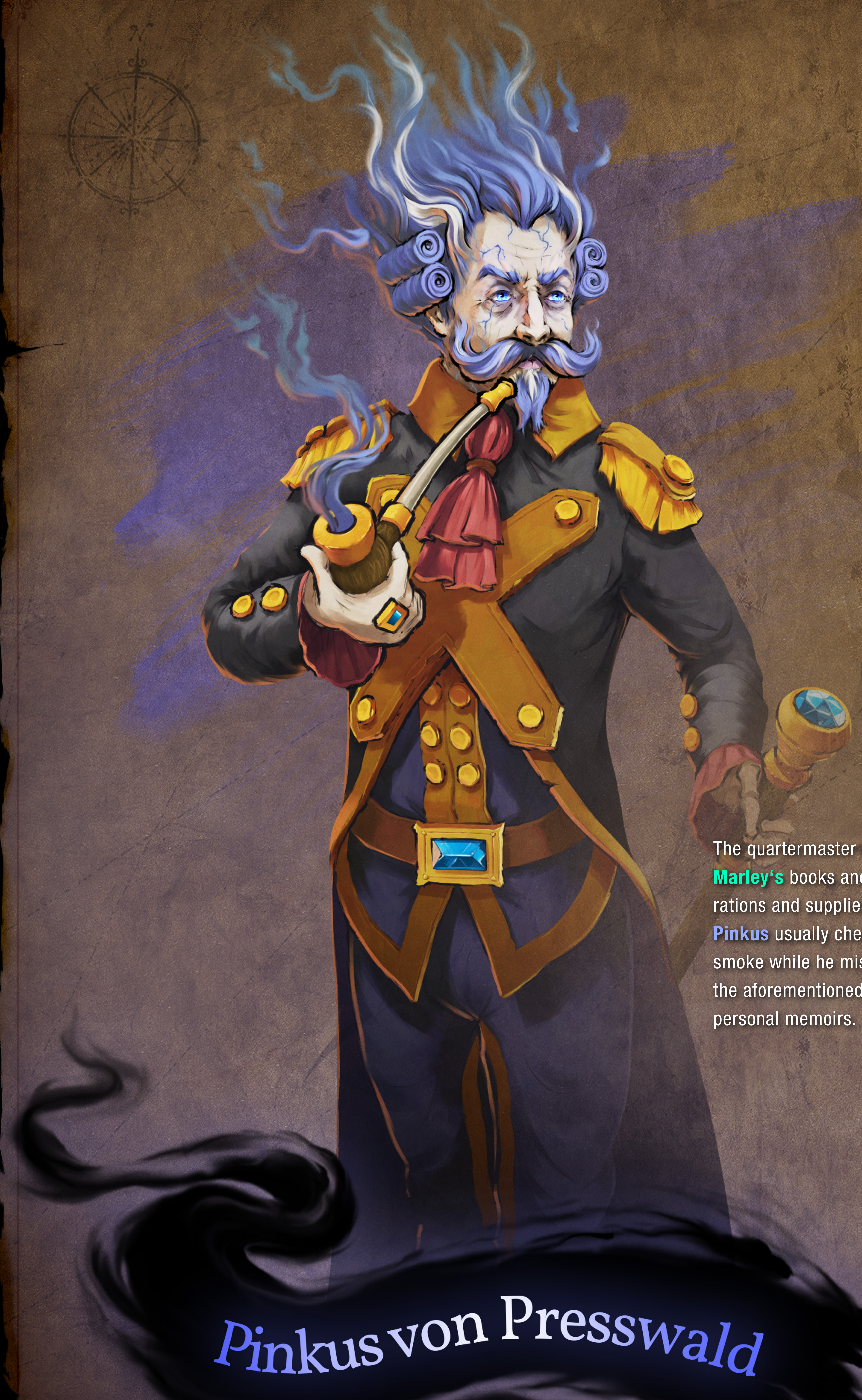
The Cannoness – Whatever weapons and cannons need tending to on the Marley, **Gaëlle** is here to fix, fire and maintain them. She also writes poems on the side and reads them to those who are willing to listen.



The first idea for the cannon-wielding character was a frail skeleton missing half its skull after looking down the barrel of a cannon when it suddenly went off. Though funny, we decided that too many characters with skull-heads (and in this case only half a skull-head) was too detrimental for the crew's livelihood, pun intended.

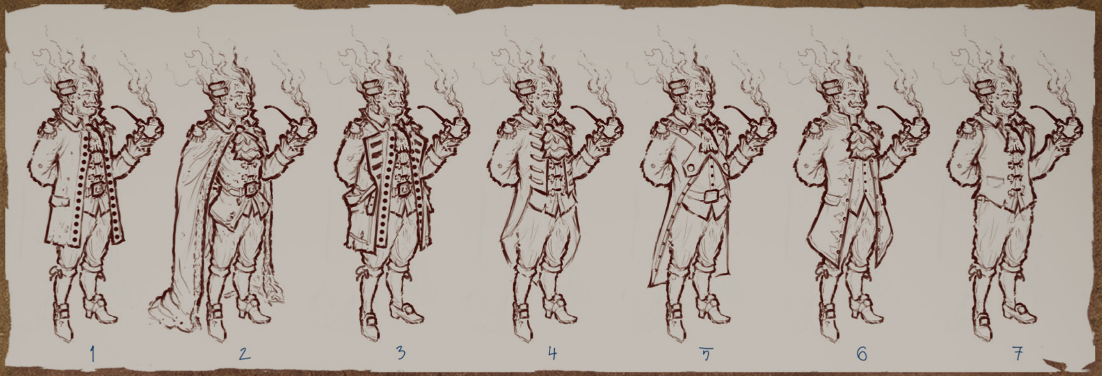
Many suggestions came in from the whole team and eventually we landed on Gaëlle from France, a strong woman with a hole in her abdomen and her own personal cannon on her back.





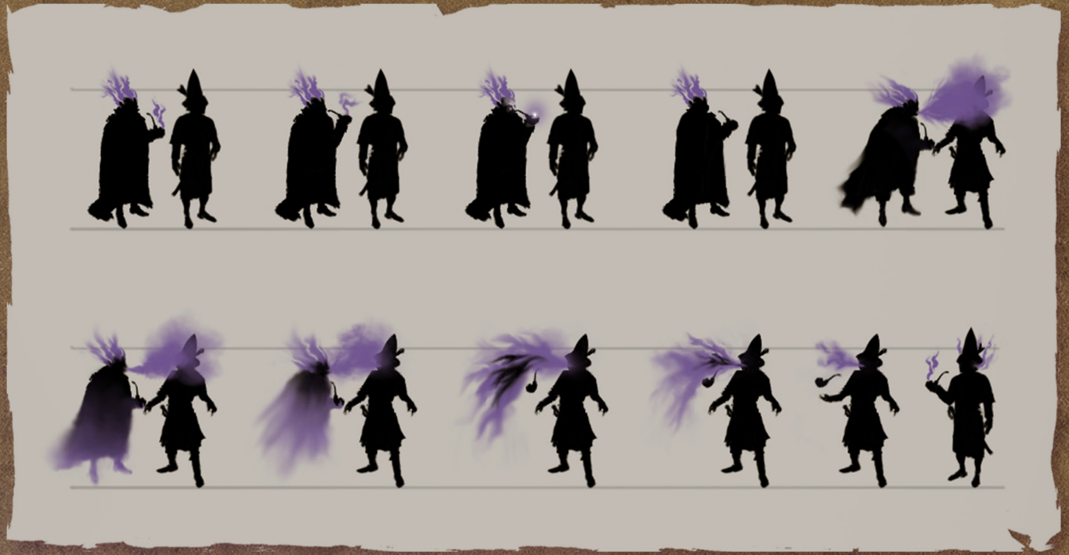
Pinkus von Presswald

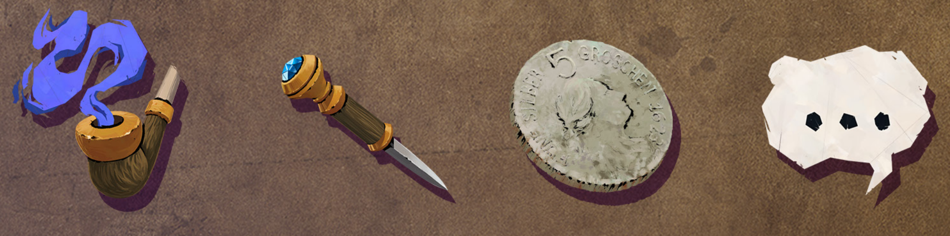
The quartermaster keeps the **Marley's** books and oversees rations and supplies. Besides that, **Pinkus** usually cherishes a good smoke while he misappropriates the aforementioned books as his personal memoirs.



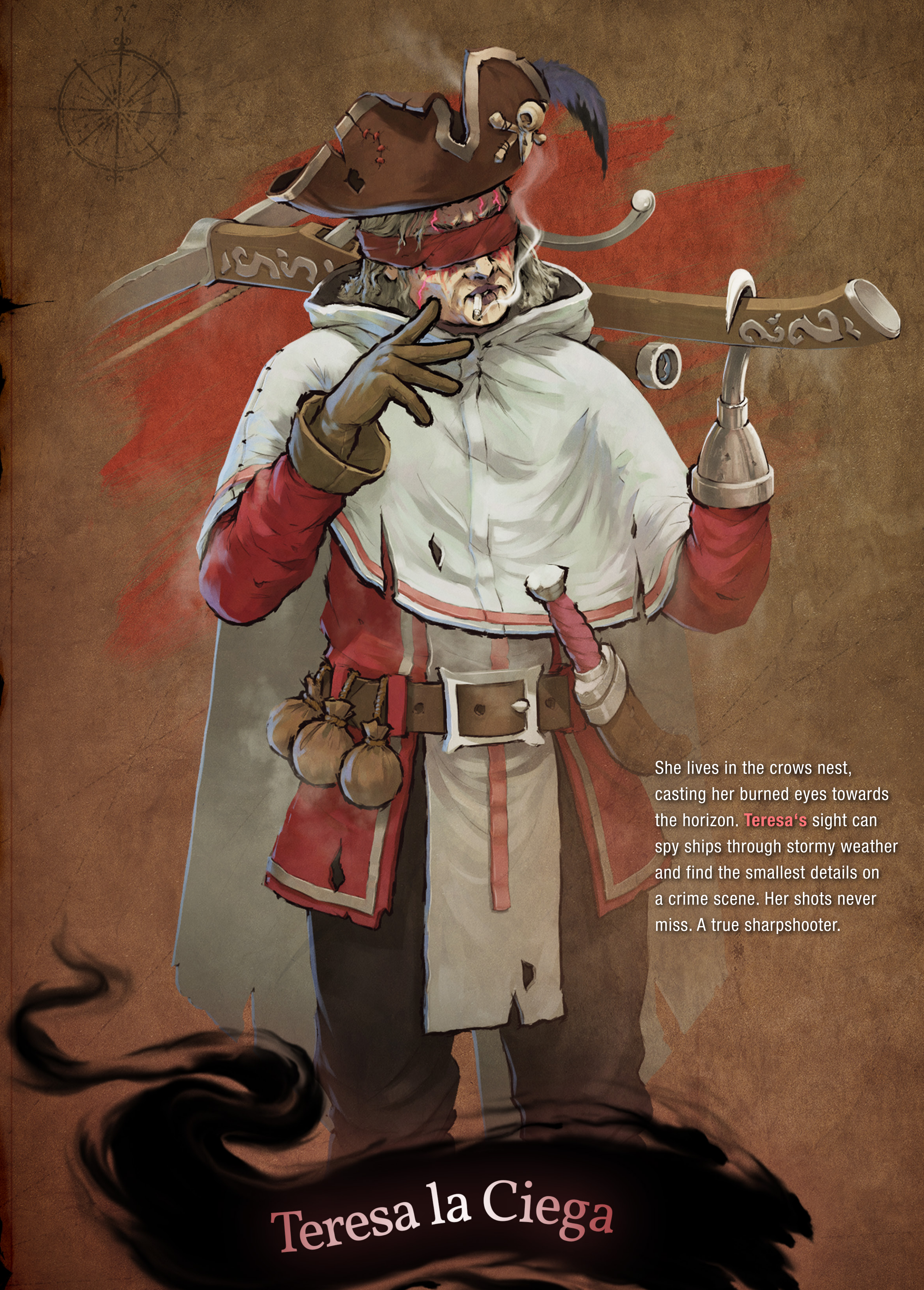
As always, work on **Pinkus'** skillset started before his visuals. His ability to "enter" an enemy body and control it directly is a twist on Desperados III's Isabelle, so there was a big predetermined voodoo-elephant in the room, which was difficult to ignore.

Eventually we came up with a German nobleman wielding the ability to vanish into a cloud of smoke to enter an enemy's lungs. This theme was perfect as it allowed him to flaunt a very memorable hairstyle and carry an iconic pipe which adds to his snobby, lavish, European nobleman character. After some experimenting with his clothing and beard, **Pinkus** was ready to join the crew.

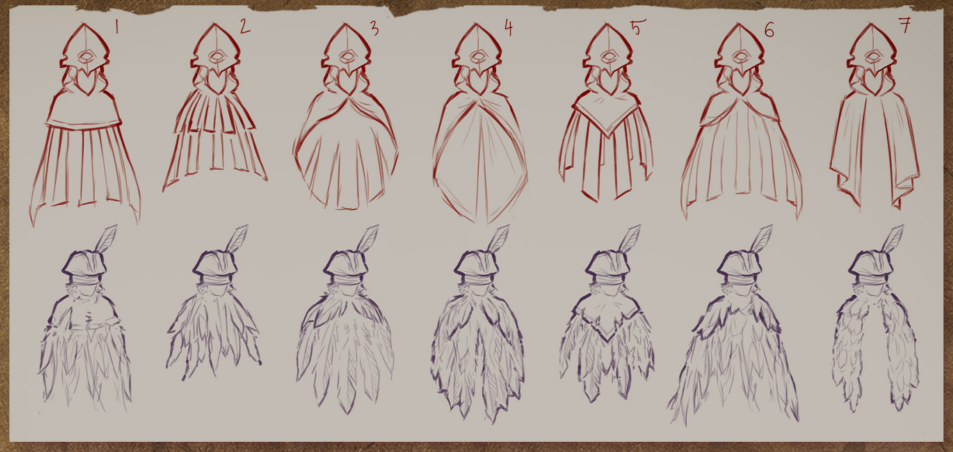




Teresa la Ciega



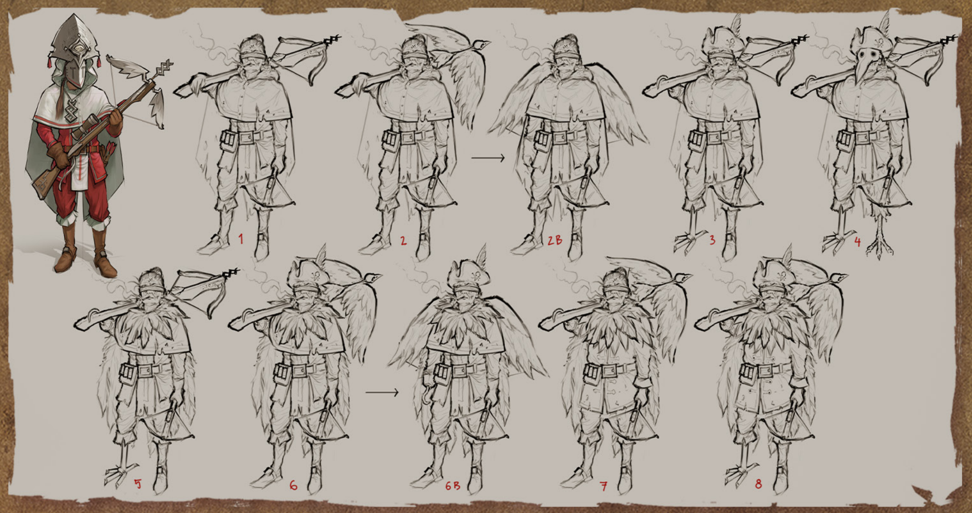
She lives in the crows nest, casting her burned eyes towards the horizon. **Teresa's** sight can spy ships through stormy weather and find the smallest details on a crime scene. Her shots never miss. A true sharpshooter.

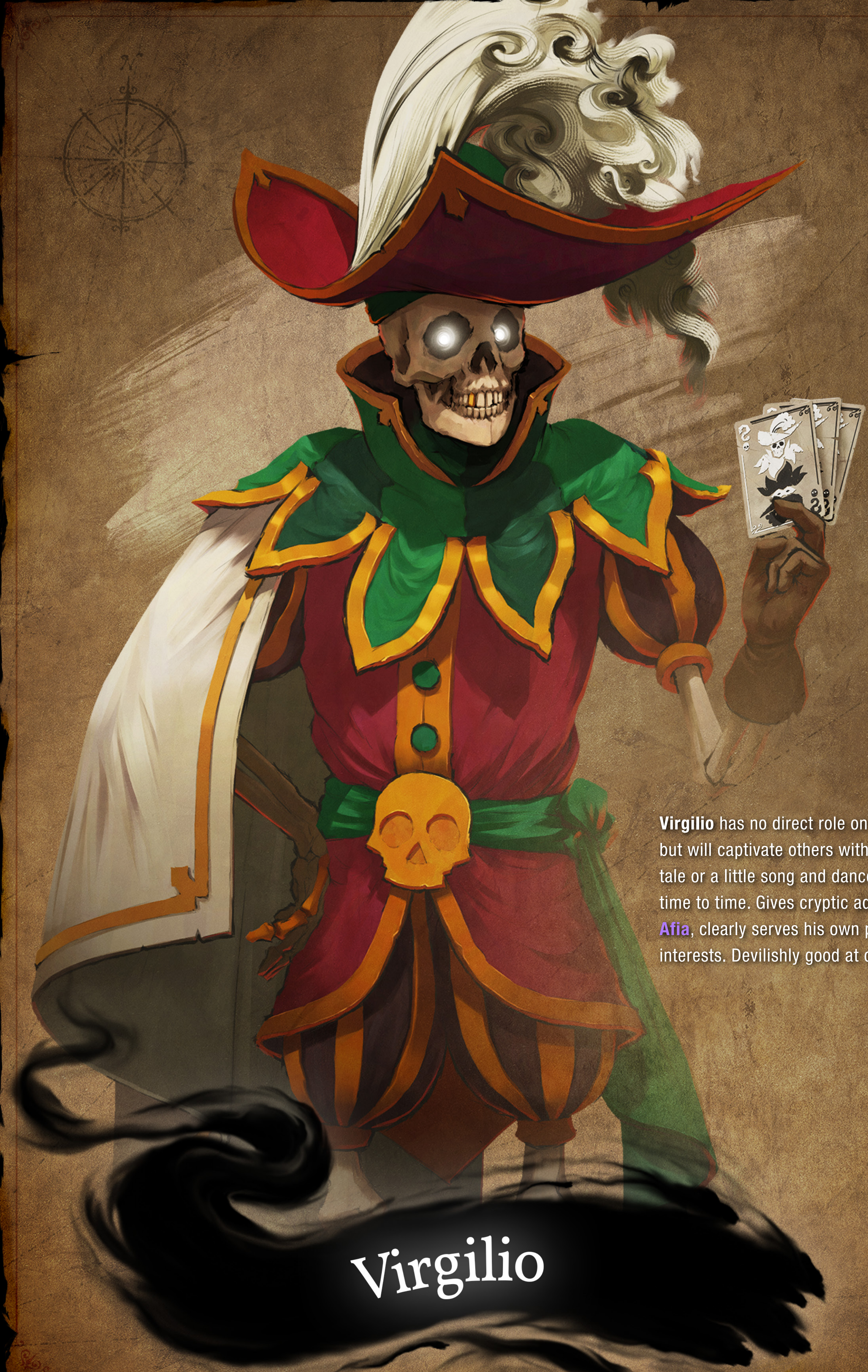


The elderly ex-Inquisition sniper went through many iterations where we tried combining the Inquisition attire with elements of a crow. Though this looked pretty awesome, she was caught in limbo between these two iconic appearances, where one took away from the other.

We decided to almost completely scrap the crow theme to allow the ex-Inquisition look to fully come through. All that remains in her final version - almost purely as homage to her countless earlier iterations - is a crow's foot-shaped pegleg and a little crow skull on her hat.

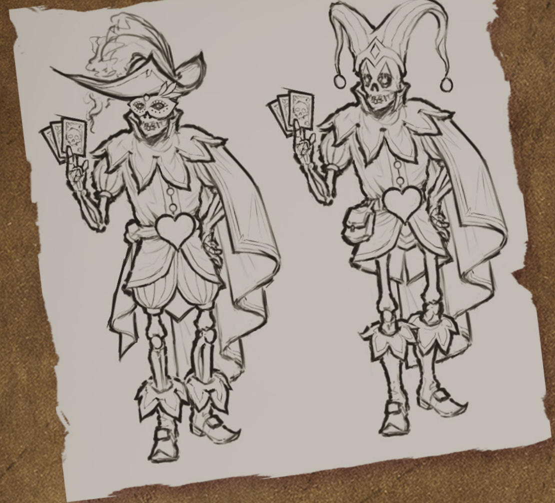
To support her past as a mutilated, blinded and exiled member of the Inquisition, we also gave her a hook hand and an overall ash-flavored theme, which is shown mostly through her cigarette and visual effects.





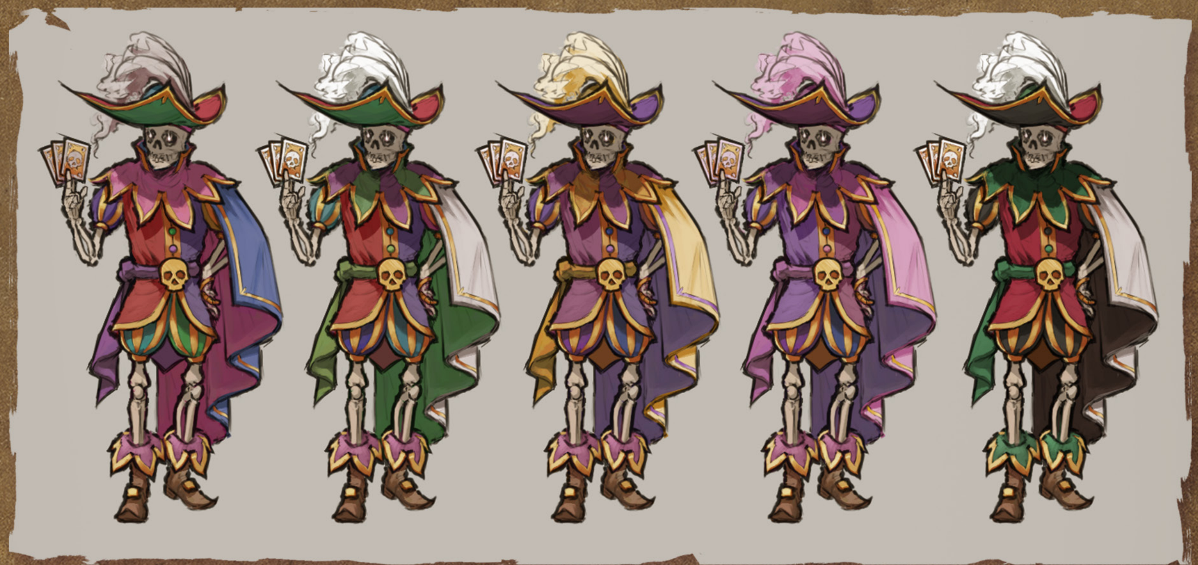
Virgilio

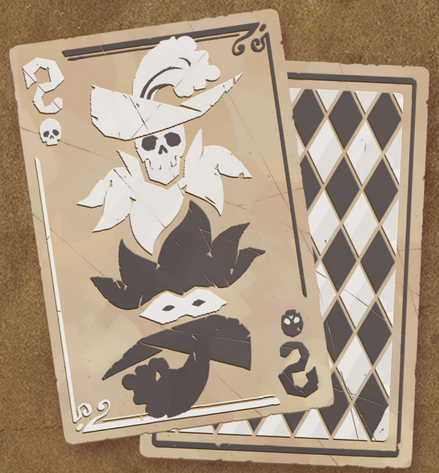
Virgilio has no direct role on the ship, but will captivate others with a tall tale or a little song and dance from time to time. Gives cryptic advice to **Afia**, clearly serves his own personal interests. Devilishly good at cards.

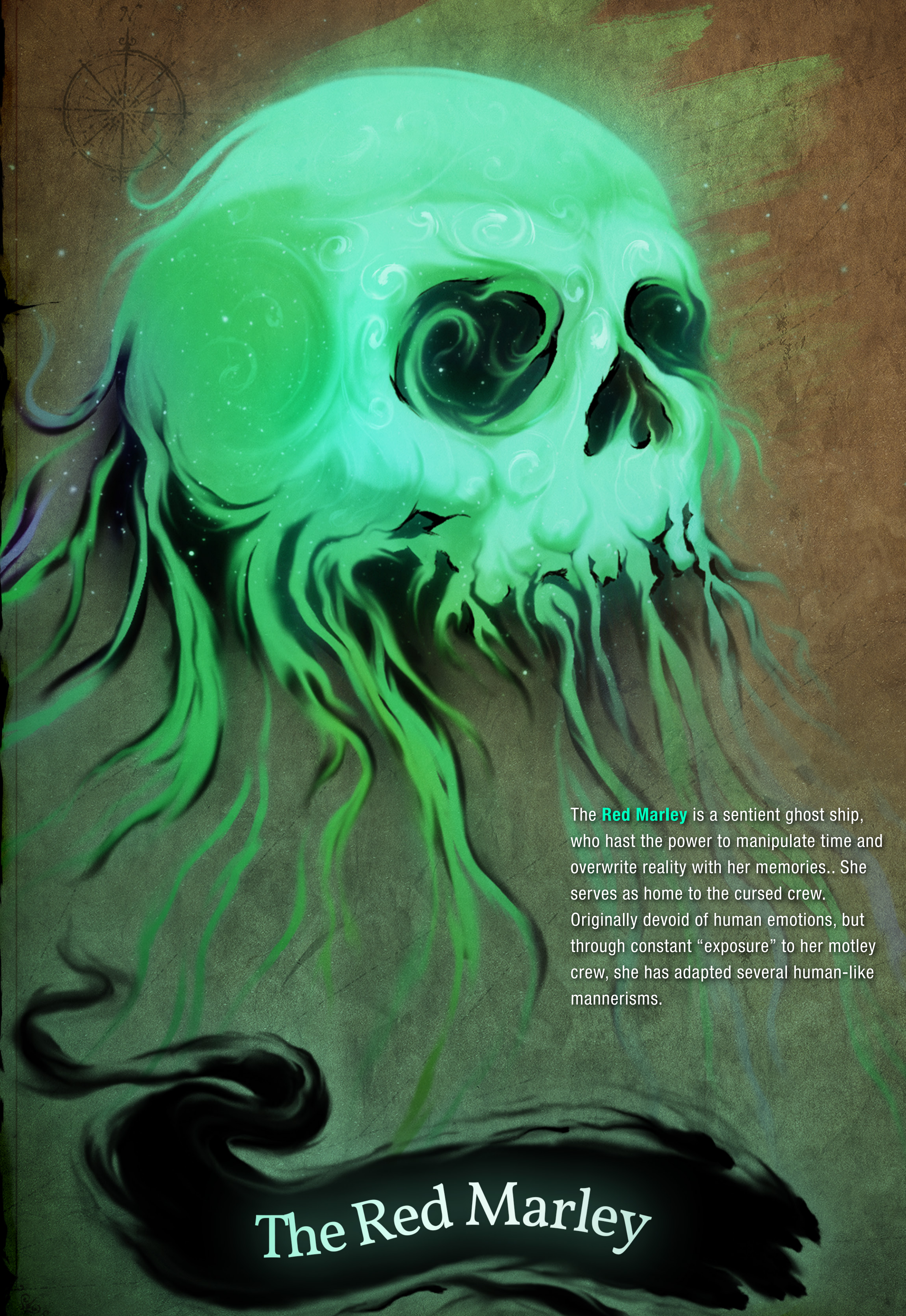


Since **Virgilio** is somewhat of a “trickster” character in the story who knows a lot more than he cares to admit, what better way to portray him than a magical flamboyant gambler skeleton?

To steer clear of the thin line between that and a court jester, we outfitted him with an asymmetrical cape and hat, resembling a Venetian carnival costume in a way. After this was done, we had virtually no choice but to give him an Italian name and accent.

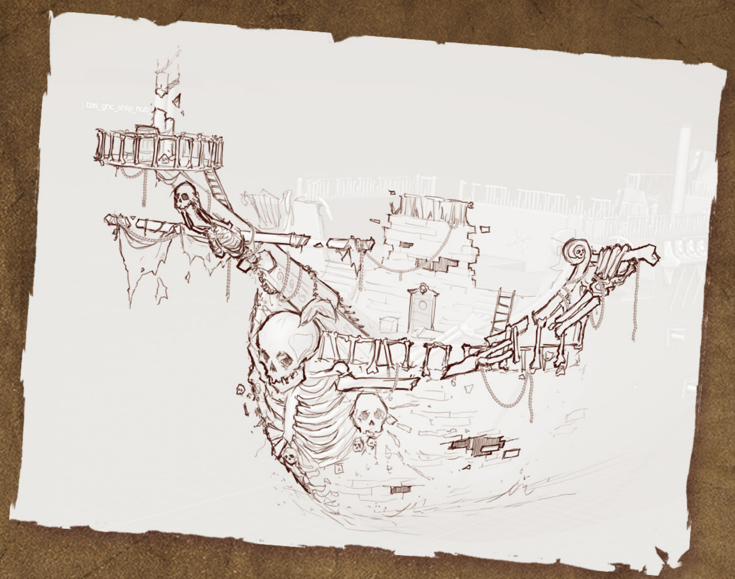






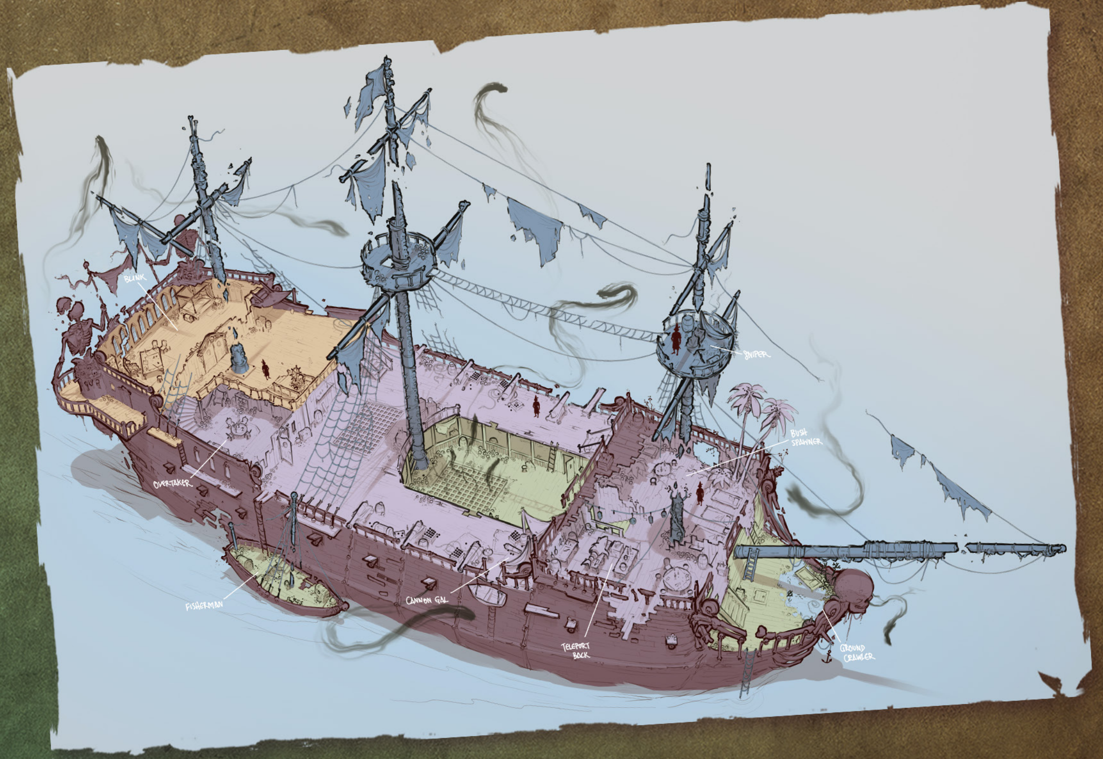
The Red Marley

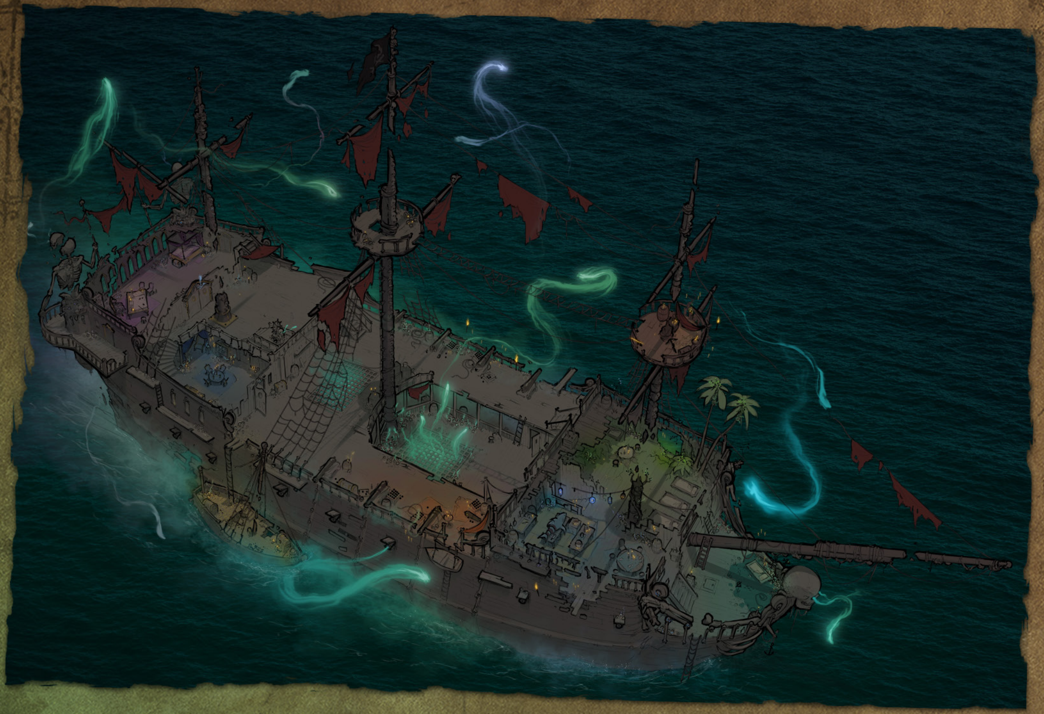
The **Red Marley** is a sentient ghost ship, who hast the power to manipulate time and overwrite reality with her memories.. She serves as home to the cursed crew. Originally devoid of human emotions, but through constant “exposure” to her motley crew, she has adapted several human-like mannerisms.



In our first attempt at the **Red Marley**, all we wanted to achieve was a likeable, rudimentary, cozy home for our crew, where each crew member would have their own personal little territory on deck decorated with assets that represent them, where the player would be able to see them work and hang out.

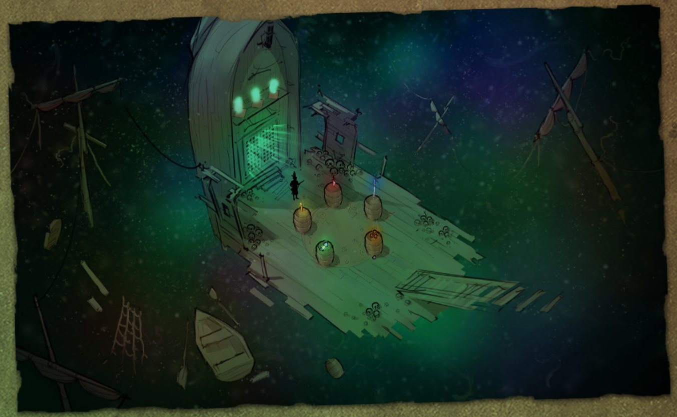
Although none of the crew members themselves had been finalized at that point, a few character ideas were already there and those characters’ areas are present in the earliest rough concept. You can find the Japan-themed tea table there that belongs to the skeletal ship cook **Toya**, as well as the alchemist desk of ship surgeon **Suleidy** who is half plant half person and always ready to patch the crew up. If you look up, you can also see the lookout where the blind sharpshooter **Teresa** takes aim from.

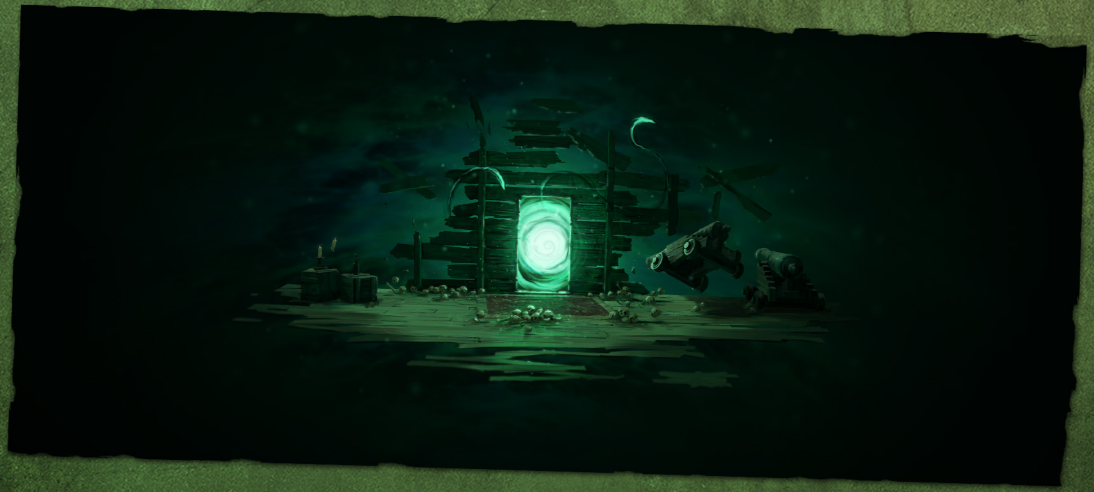


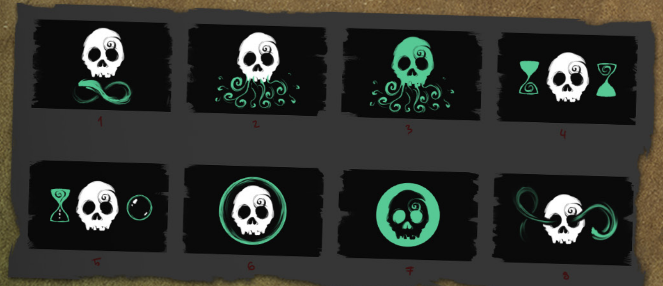


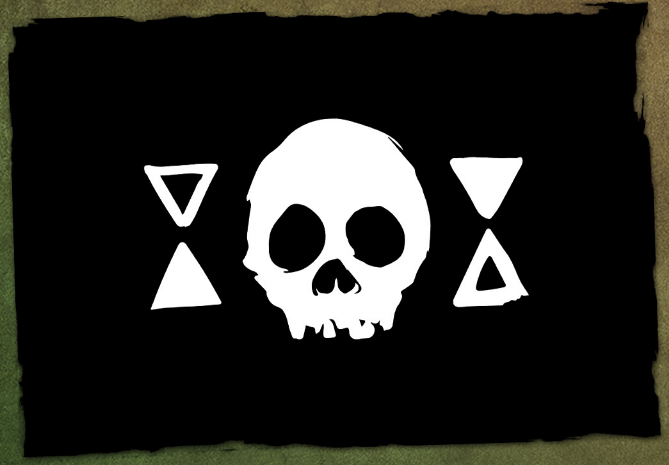
The **Marley's** interior is a magical void containing various locations used for the plot, tutorials, and even secret chambers. We wanted to achieve a unique look with close to limitless possibilities of what we could build while still somewhat resembling a ship's interior.

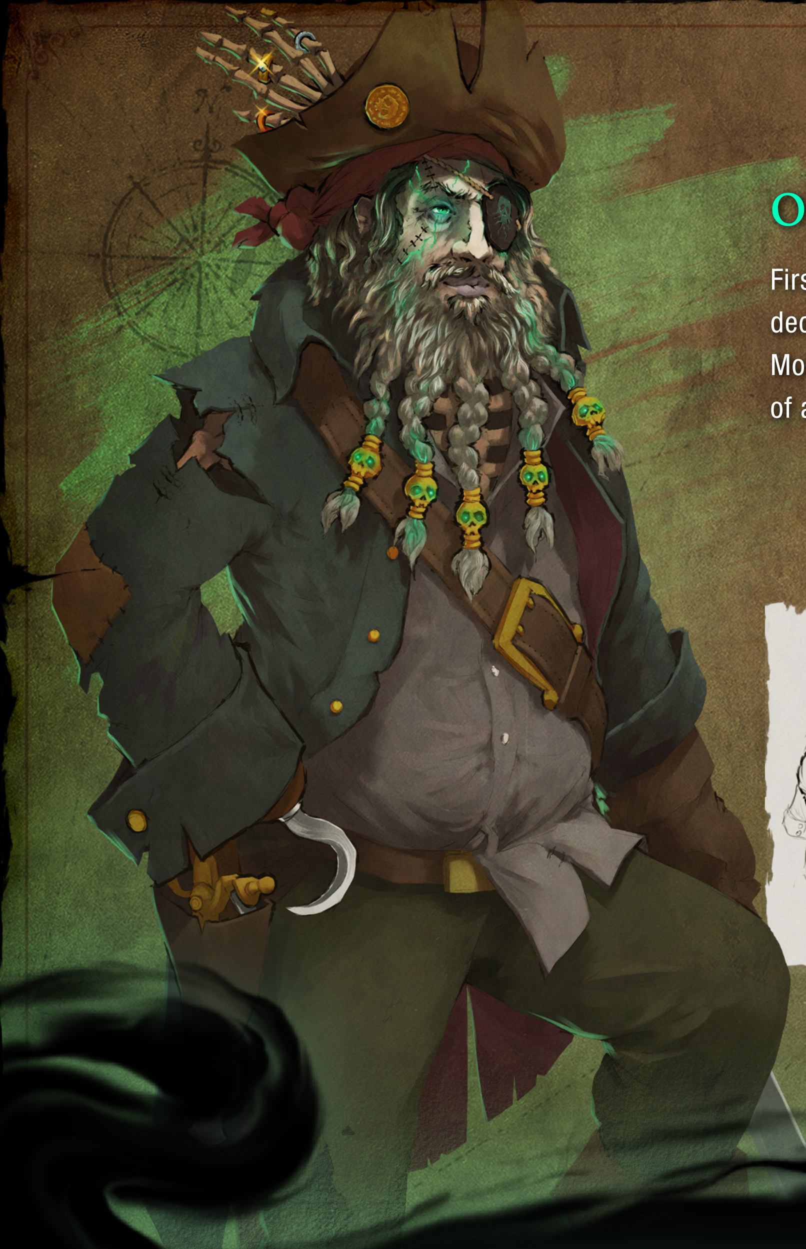
We conquered this task by creating countless broken wooden platforms and other ship pieces like masts, rigging, furniture etc. These objects would often be floating in mid-air to convey the Marley's magical time-manipulating powers, and offered a wide range of possibilities for the level designers to go crazy!





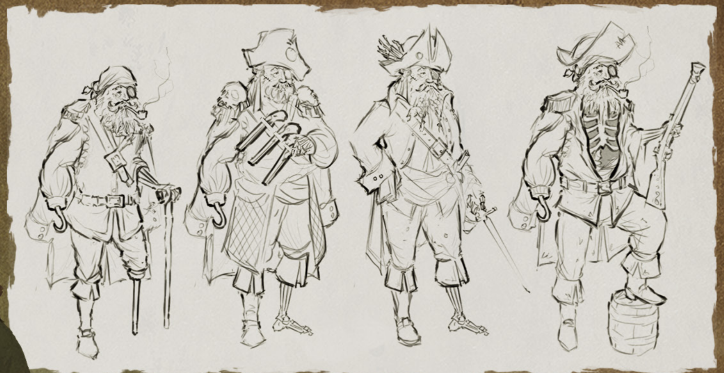




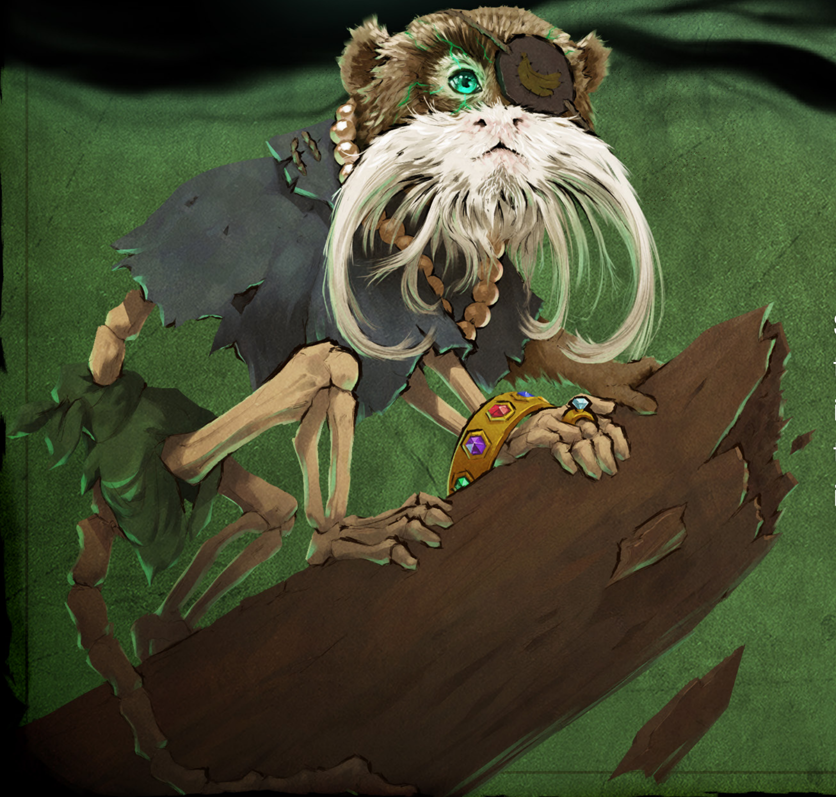


OLD CAPTAIN MORDECHAI

First and only Captain of the **Red Marley**. He was decapitated and burned by **Inquisitor Ignacia**. Mordechai created the **Marley** by stealing a piece of a powerful soul and putting it in his ship.

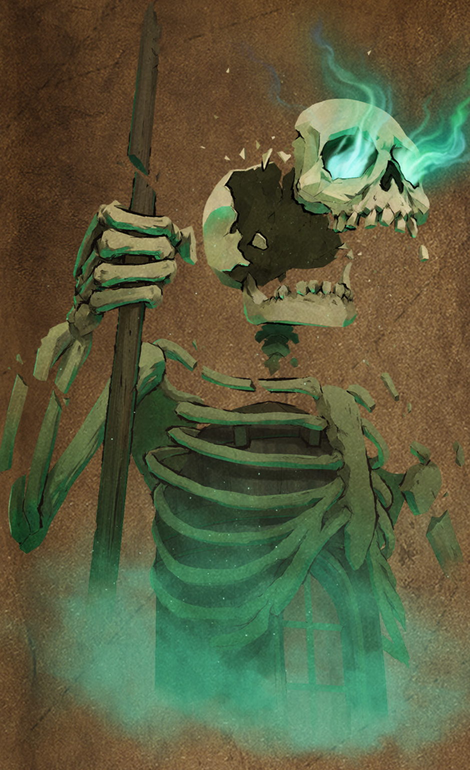


Marley‘s Crew



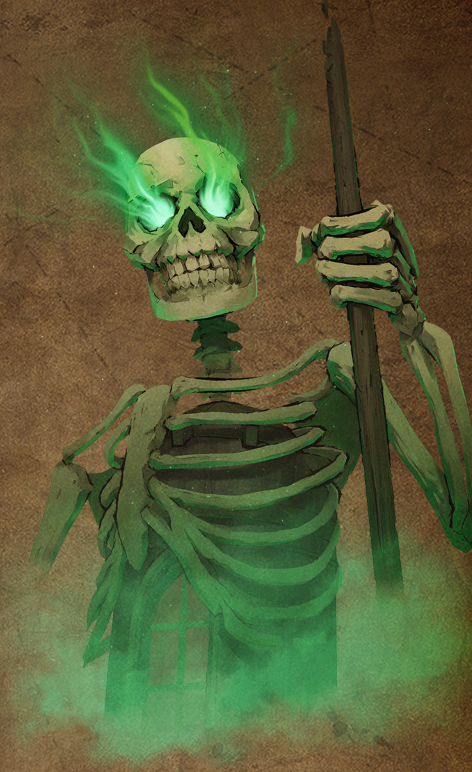
ESTELLE

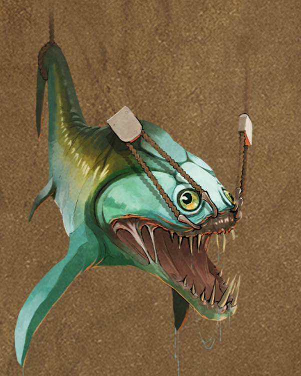
She is the ship‘s monkey and the bouncer of the **Red Marley‘s** most important door leading into the deeper decks of the ship. The old captain Mordechai implemented this mechanism into her for safety reasons.

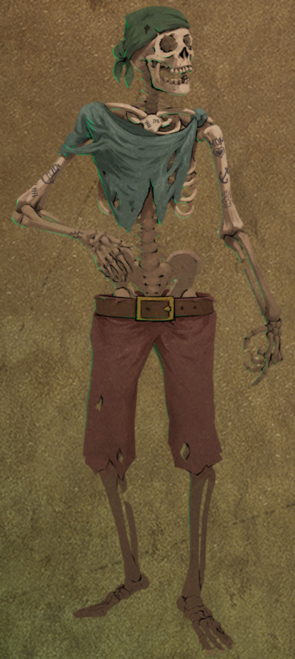


PETE AND THE NAMELESS ONE

Powerful and mischievous souls (luckily) bound to the Red Marley by an old ritual. Much to the dismay of the rest of the crew, they are in charge of the rum rationing on deck . When in doubt, it‘s their fault.

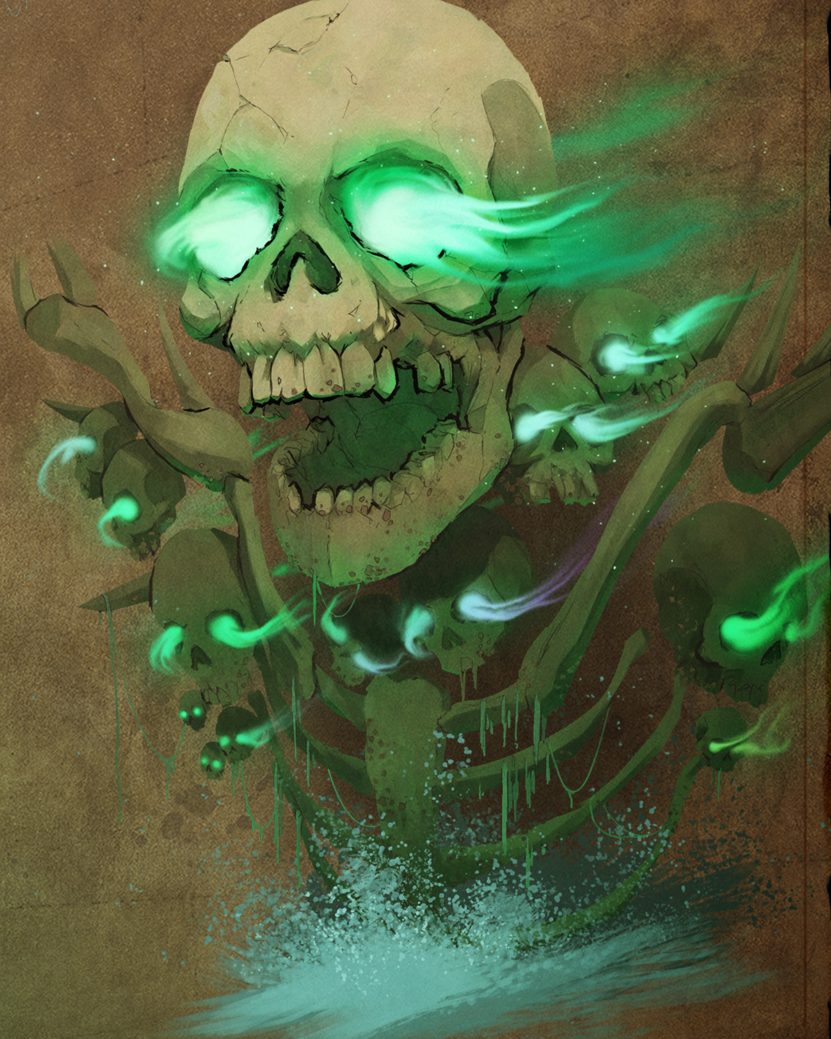






OLD GERTRUDE

The ancient figure head of the **Red Marley**. Somehow even older than the **Red Marley** herself, she unfortunately doesn‘t remember where she‘s from or generally anything really. Provides the occasional surge of wisdom if you take your time and listen closely to her, though.

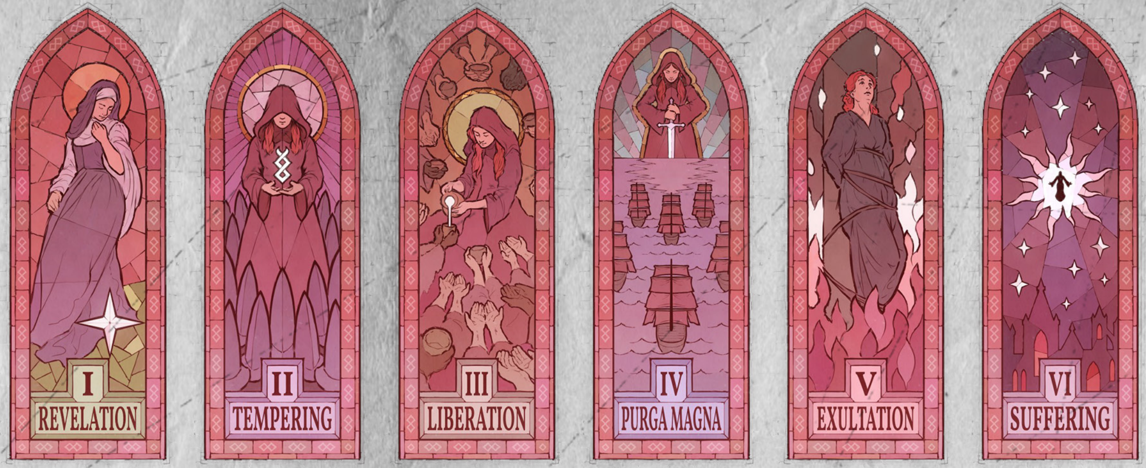


THE INQUISITION OF THE BURNING MAIDEN

The Inquisition of the Burning Maiden is a religious army dedicated to the eradication of the Cursed and Soul Energy. They control large parts of **the Lost Caribbean** and hunt cursed pirates like you and your crew.

They worship a messiah figure called the **Burning Maiden**, use a strange white flame, the **Maiden‘s Fire**, to battle the Cursed and work tirelessly to realize the Maiden‘s enigmatic **Grand Design**.

The **Grand Design** dictates all aspects of life for those of the Inquisition. It is their mission to enforce the Grand Design everywhere they go. It describes all aspects of life in great detail, from how to properly wake up in the morning to grand concepts like the organizational structure of the Inquisition.



THE MAIDEN

According to holy scripture, the Curse of Lost Souls threw **the Lost Caribbean** into chaos until an unassuming servant of the Spanish Inquisition finds an ever-burning white flame that grants her visions of the future and allows her to fight back the undead menace.

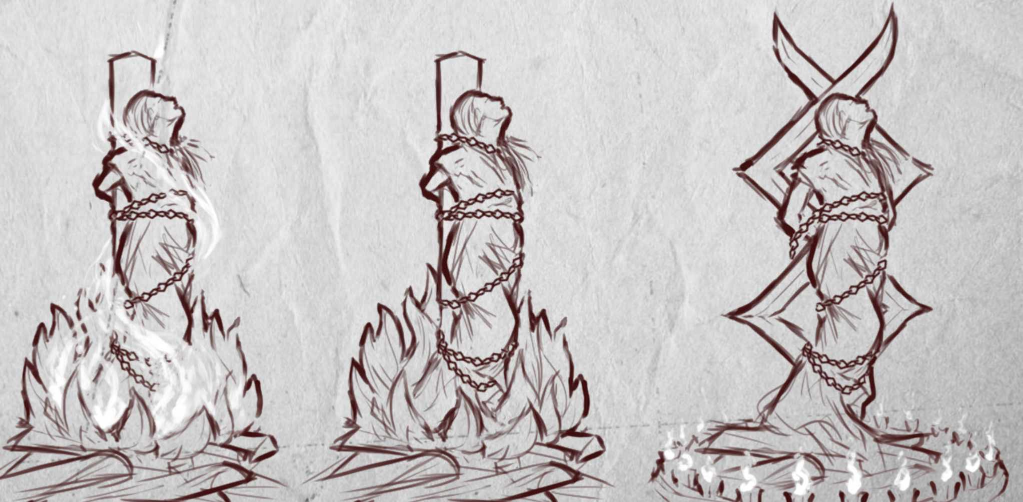
The woman becomes known simply as the **Maiden**, and the strange flame gets the nickname **Maiden‘s Fire**. She quickly gathers a sizeable following until **the Lost Caribbean** finds a balance between those who are dead and those who live.

At some point, agents of the Spanish Monarchy accuse **the Maiden** of heresy, aiming to take control over her forces and territory. She is tried for heresy and burned at stake.

She does not die. Instead, the flames on her pyre turn white, and she becomes an immortal, burning corpse. She can‘t speak, she can‘t move, but her is soul and body never fully burn away, endlessly feeding the white flames.

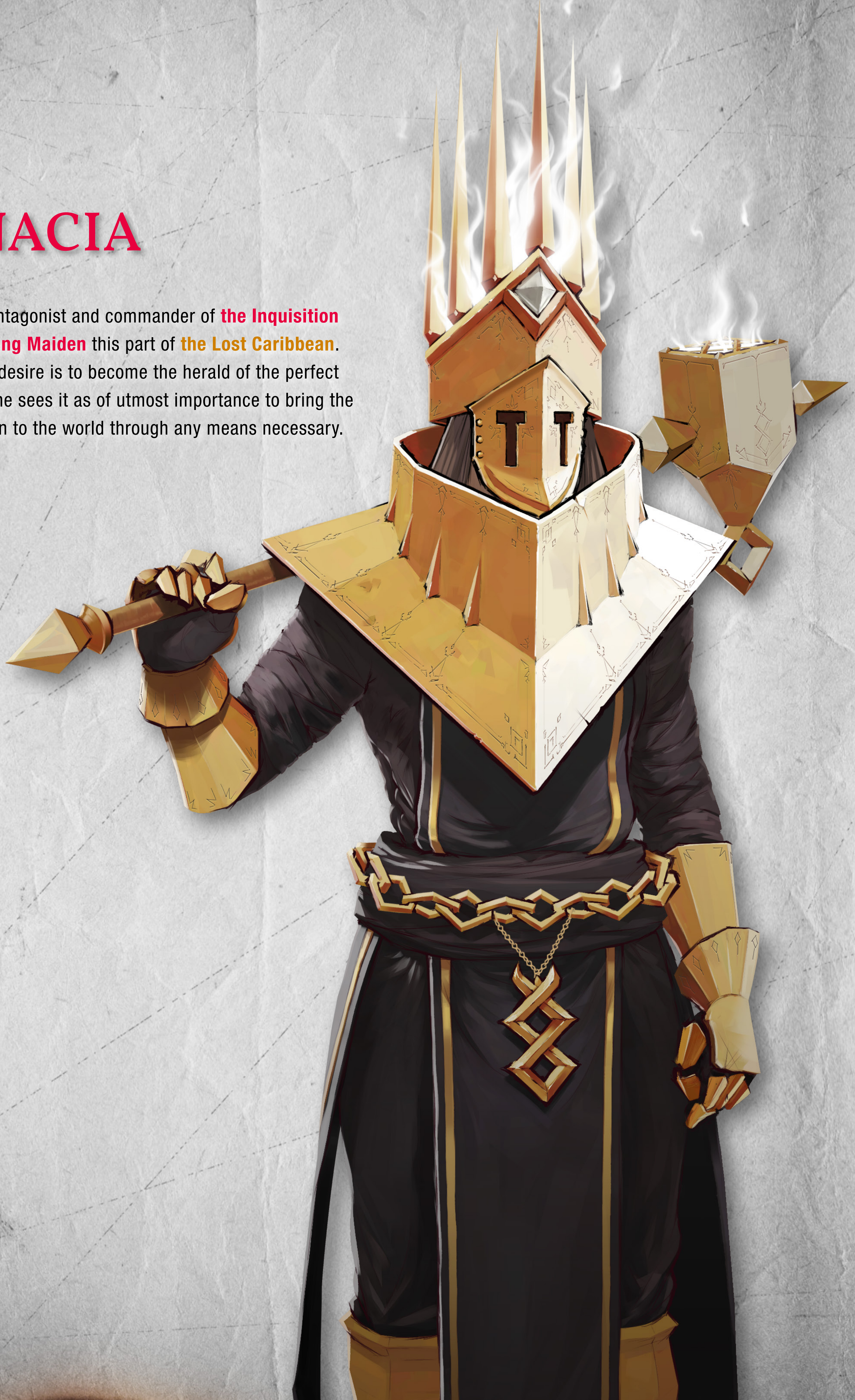
After she survives the pyre, her followers in the Spanish **Inquisition** quickly proclaim her a saint, leading them to rename themselves to **The Holy Inquisition of the Burning Maiden**.

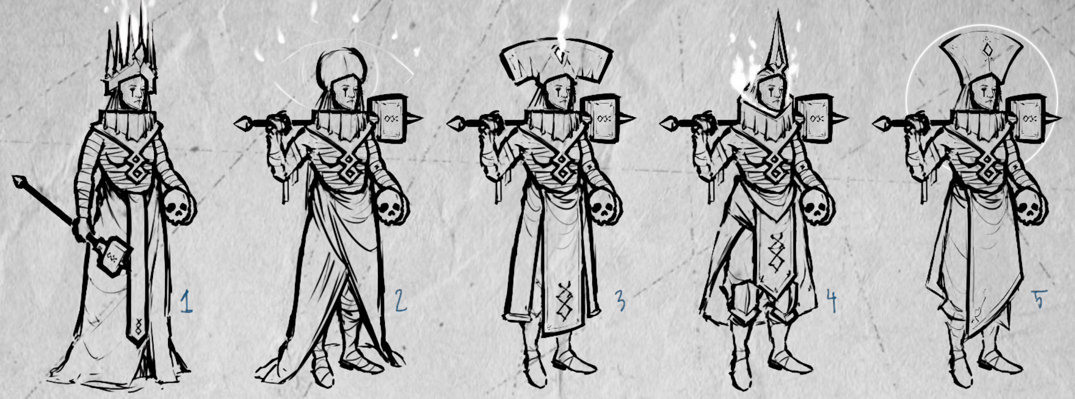
However, without **the Maiden‘s** spiritual leadership, her followers become corrupted by the Fire and the future visions it brings. Slowly but surely, they become obsessed with a concept they call the **Grand Design**, a vision of a perfect world according to **Inquisition** dogma.

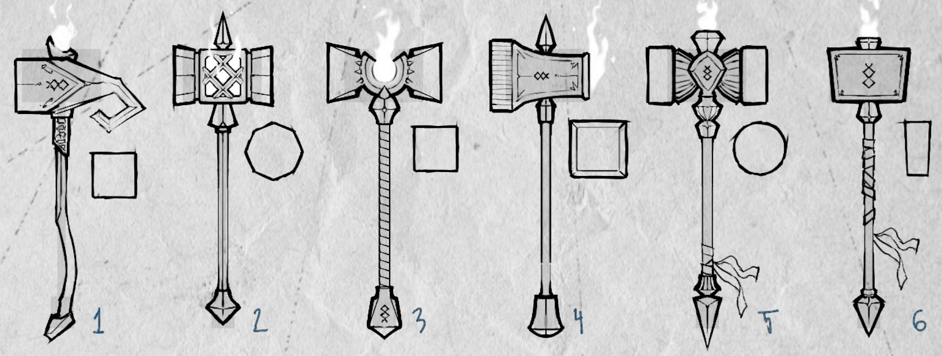


IGNACIA

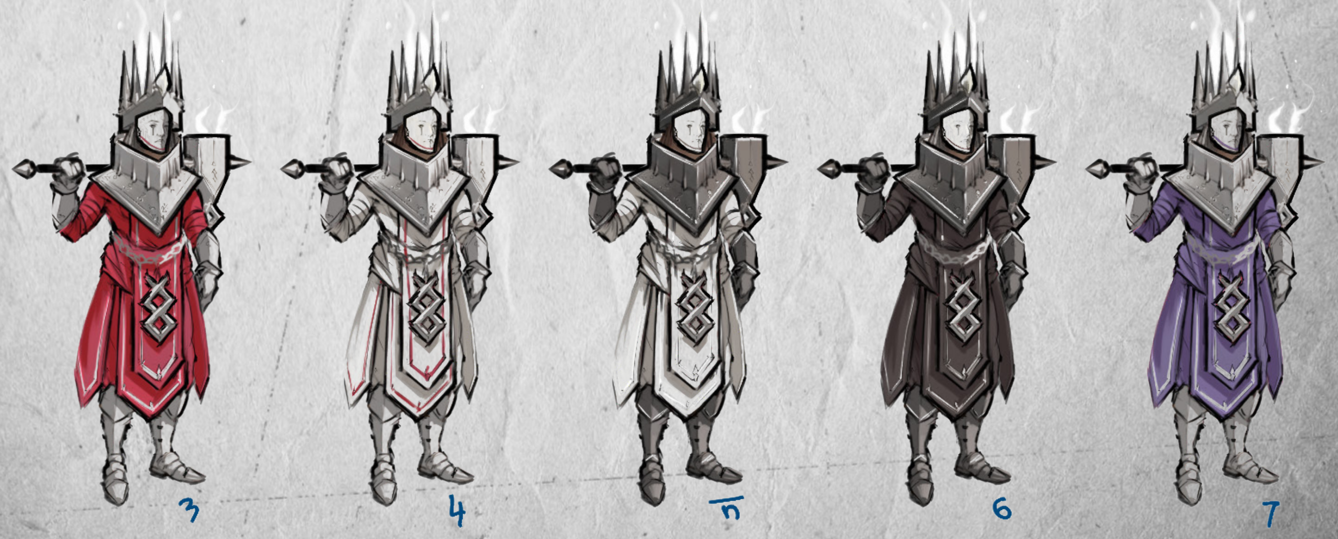
She is the antagonist and commander of **the Inquisition of the Burning Maiden** this part of **the Lost Caribbean**. Her biggest desire is to become the herald of the perfect world and she sees it as of utmost importance to bring the Grand Design to the world through any means necessary.



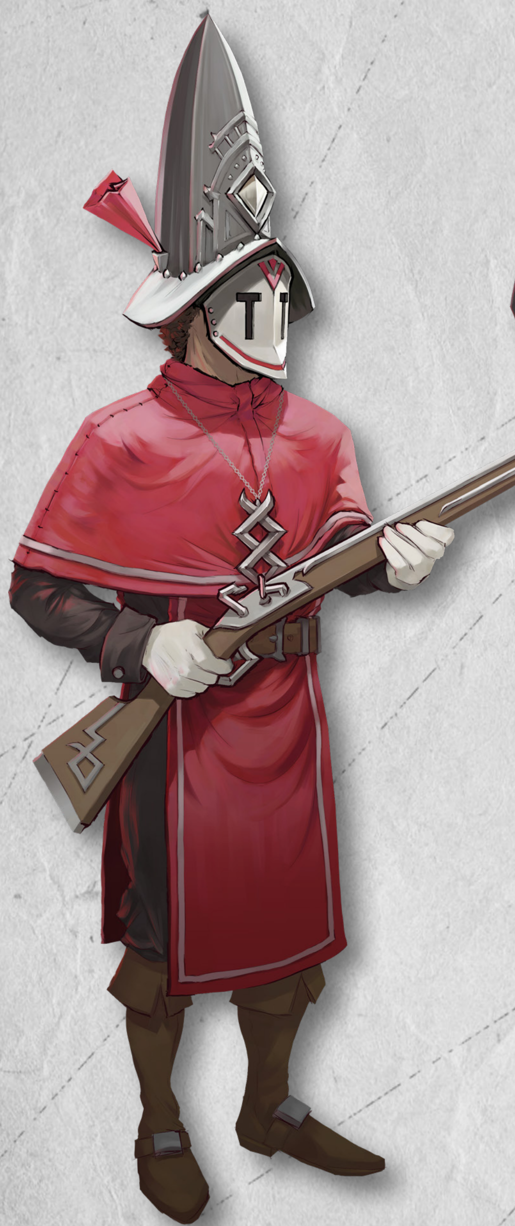




Ignacia's visual design was a tricky one since we had almost no idea where we wanted to go with her - other than "to the extreme". We tried outfitting her with fashion resembling necromancy and even Egyptian mythology, before landing on a heavy-looking plate armor with sharp angles and what seemed like a furnace for a helmet. Now a mix of barbarian and hammer-wielding cleric, the black and gold palette raised her multiple ranks above her Inquisition minions. Lastly it was important that she stood at least a head or two above regular characters in height in order to make her as intimidating and menacing as possible.

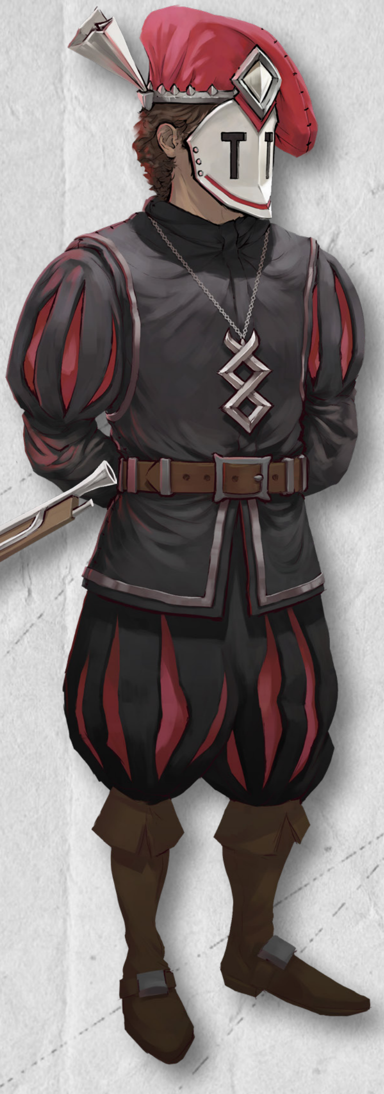


INQUISITION GUARDS



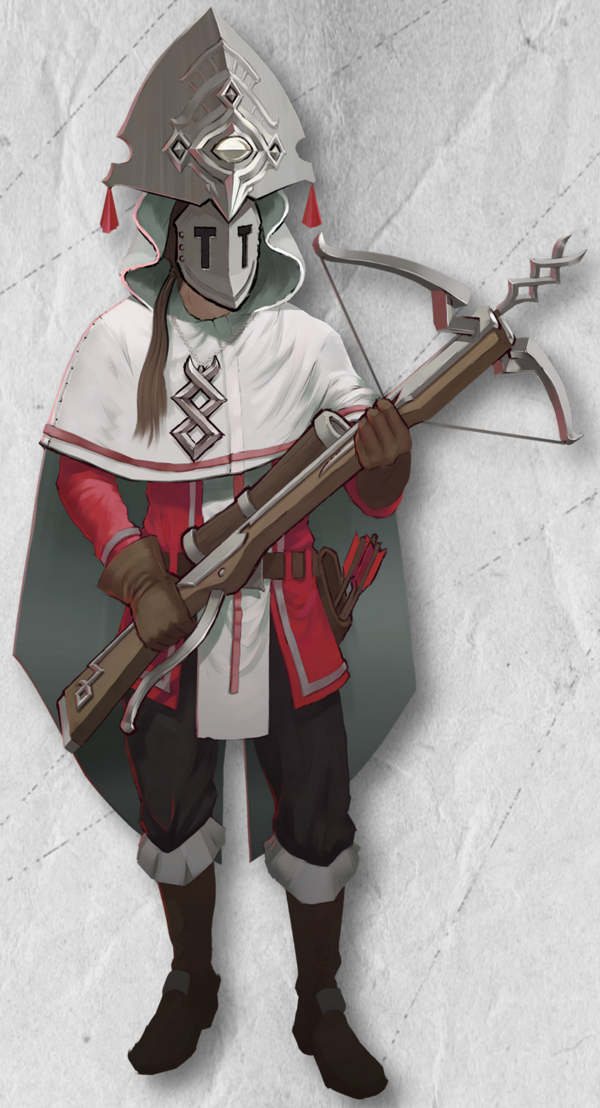
ACOLYTE

Inquisition footsoldier, mostly tasked with guard duty or delivering messages. Acolytes troops consist of both men and women, genders are split equally among their numbers.



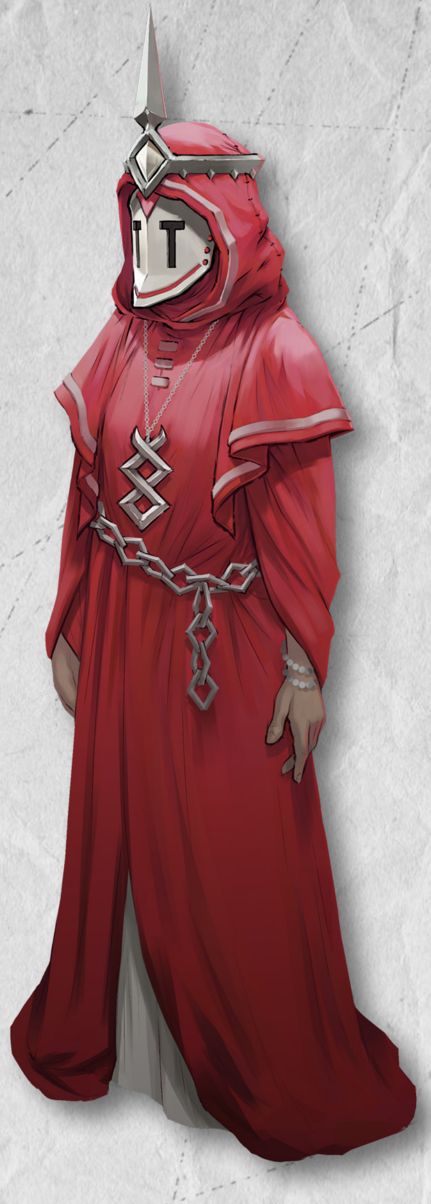
COMMISSARIUS

Military overseers for **the Inquisition** that rose from the rank of Acolyte by strictly following orders and abiding to the Laws of the Grand Design. Commissarius is a stronger version of the Acolytes.



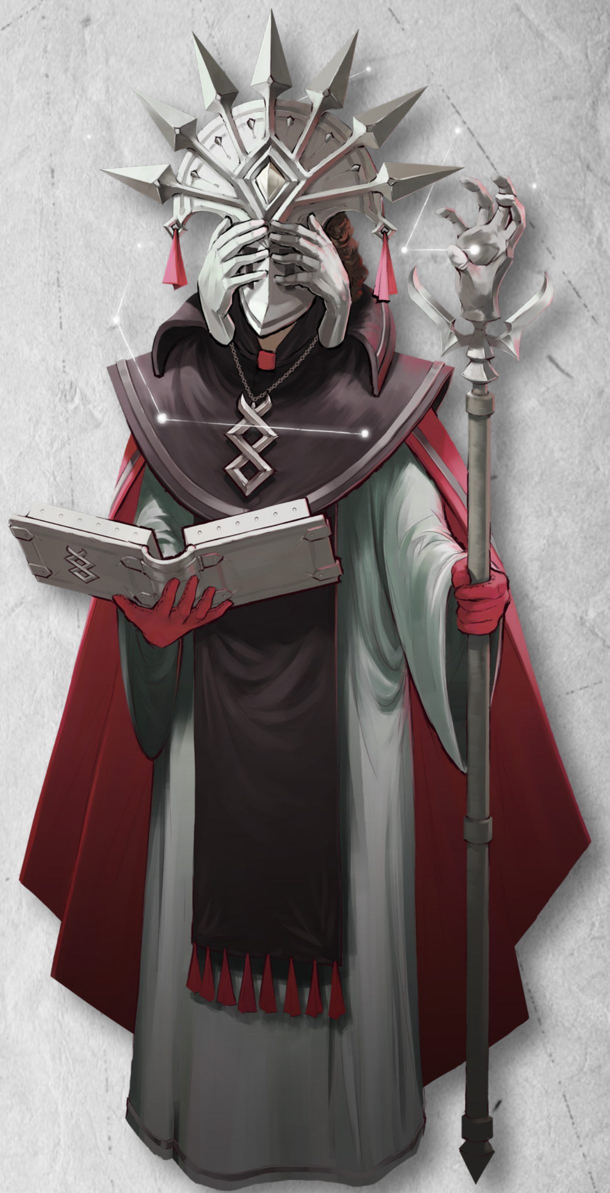
IUDEX

Judge, jury and executioner in **the Inquisition** military branch. Rains down fiery crossbow bolts on those who stray from the Grand Design. The Iudex are trained sharpshooters and have a large viewcone than the other enemy types.



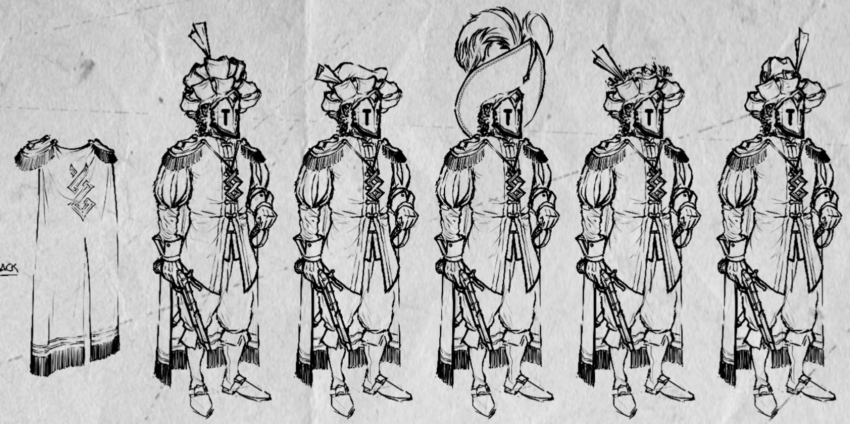
KINDRED

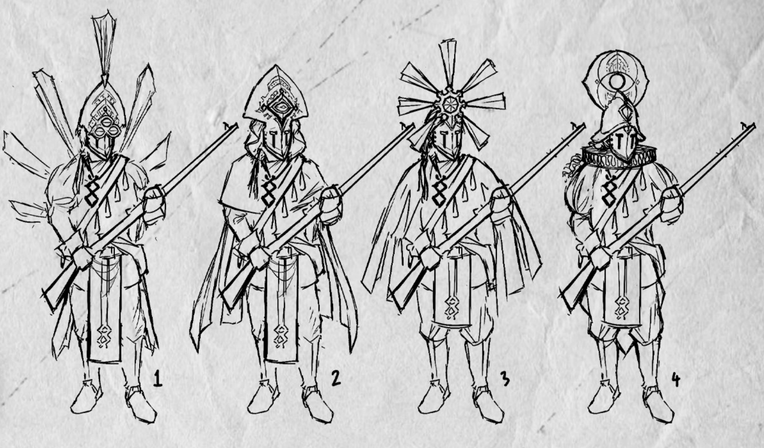
Intelligence agents for **Inquisitor Ignacia**. They always appear in pairs and share a psychic link with their partner. If one is attacked, their Other will know about it. The player has to take down all connected Kindreds together in a short timeframe to avoid raising alarm.

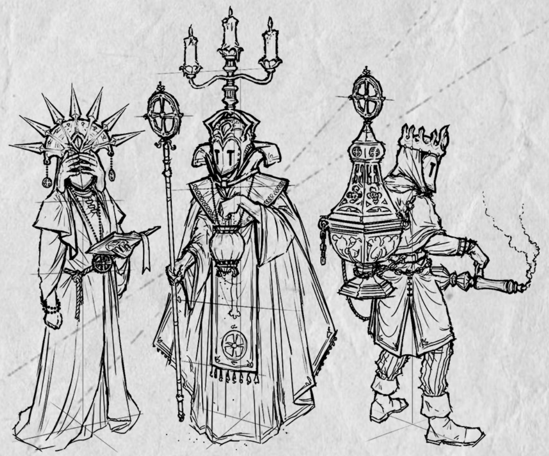


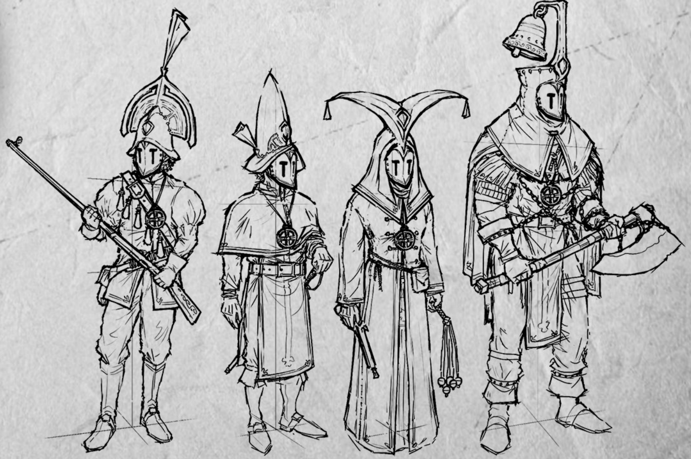
PROGNOSTICAR

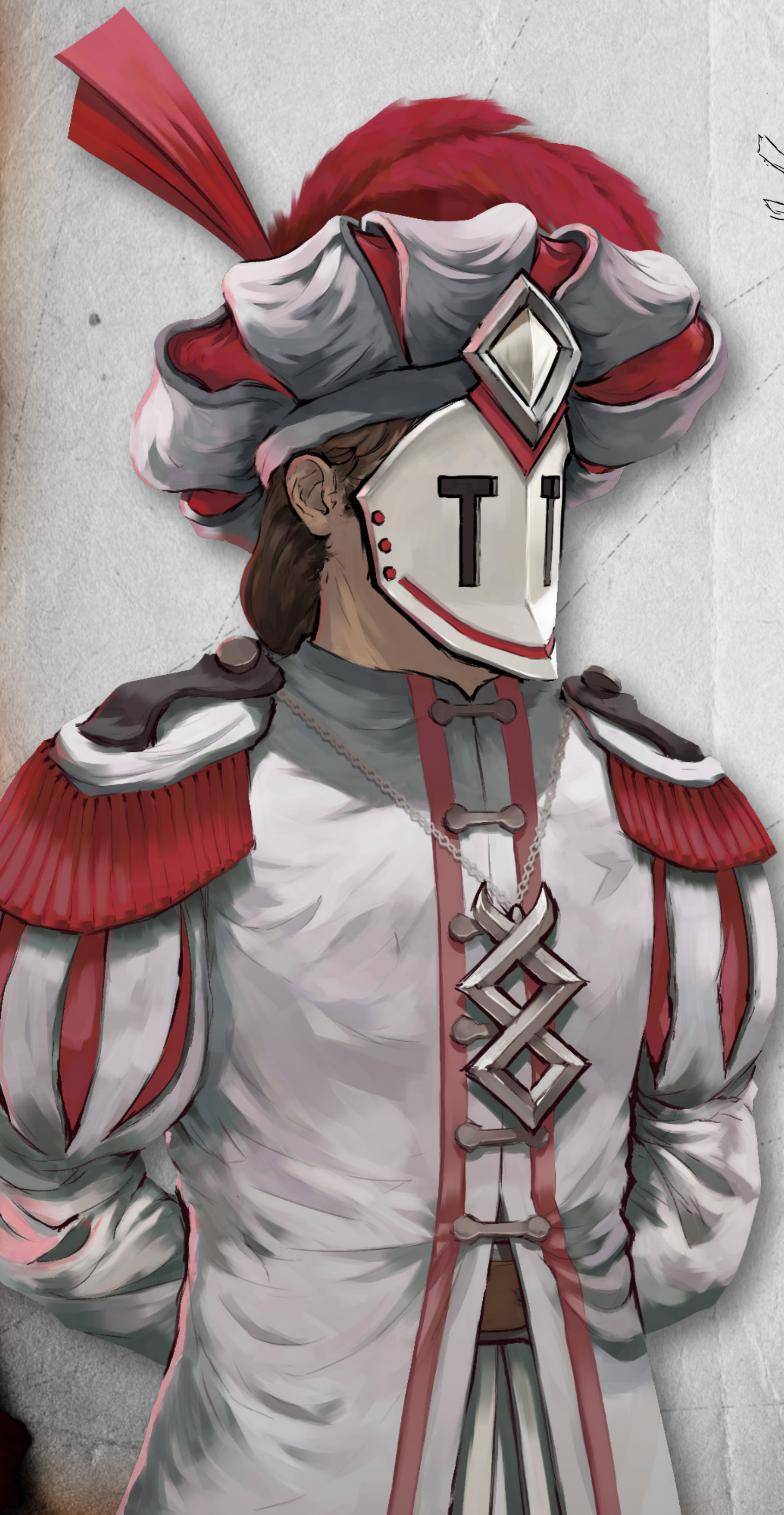
High ranking figures of the religious strata of **the Inquisition** and of the few who survive long exposure to the flame. Basically the cream of the crop of religious fanaticism. Prognosticars foresee direct attacks and counter them by burning their foes with Maiden's Fire.

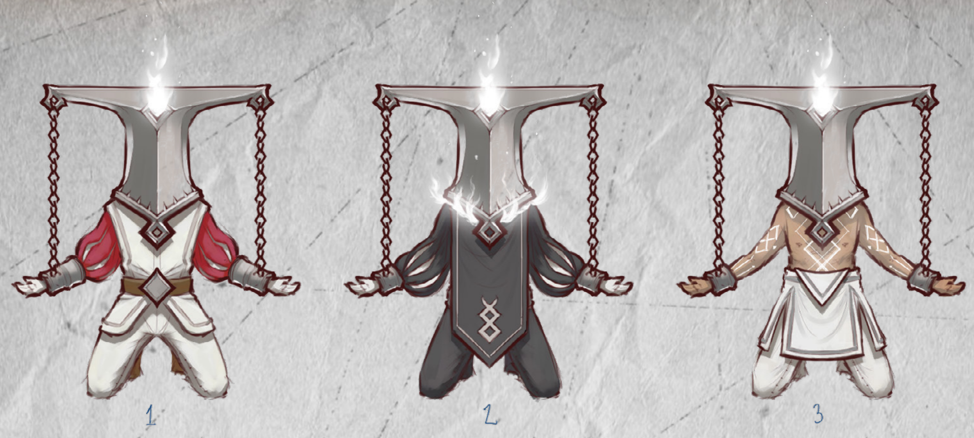


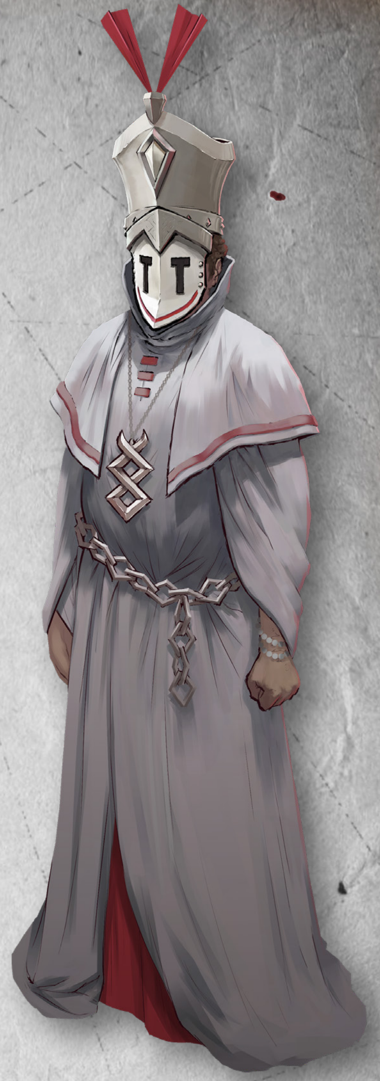








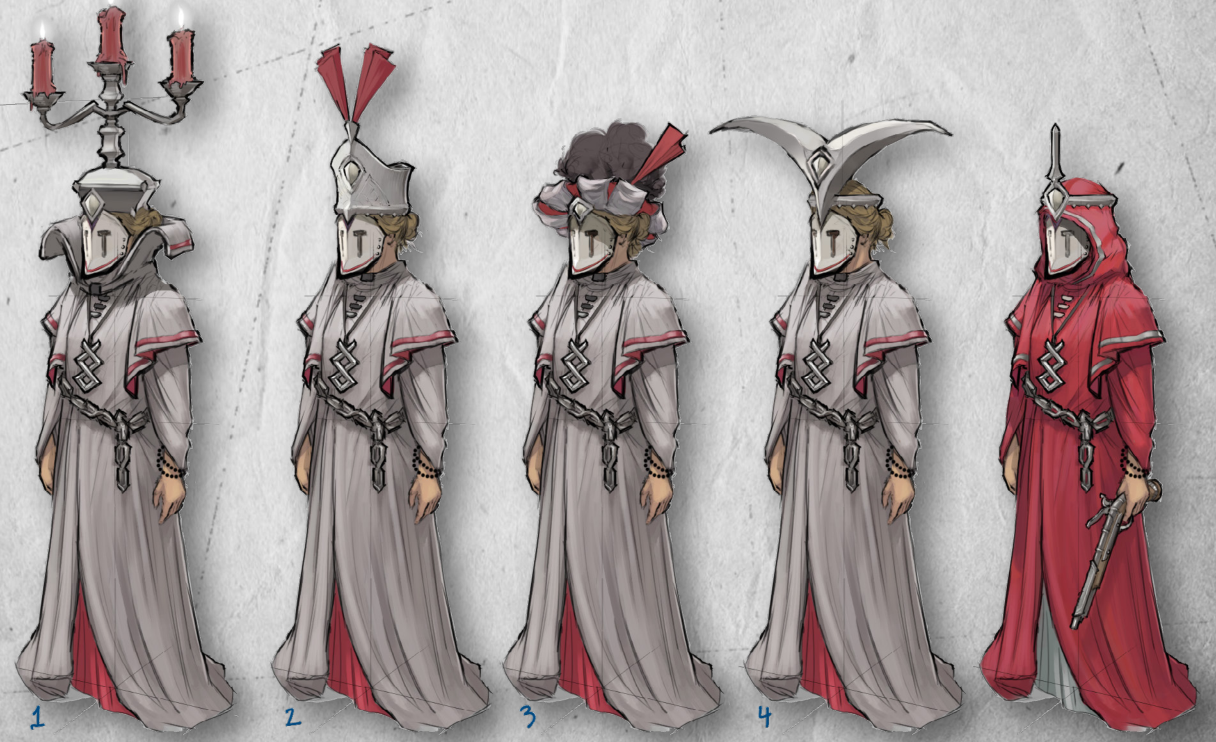




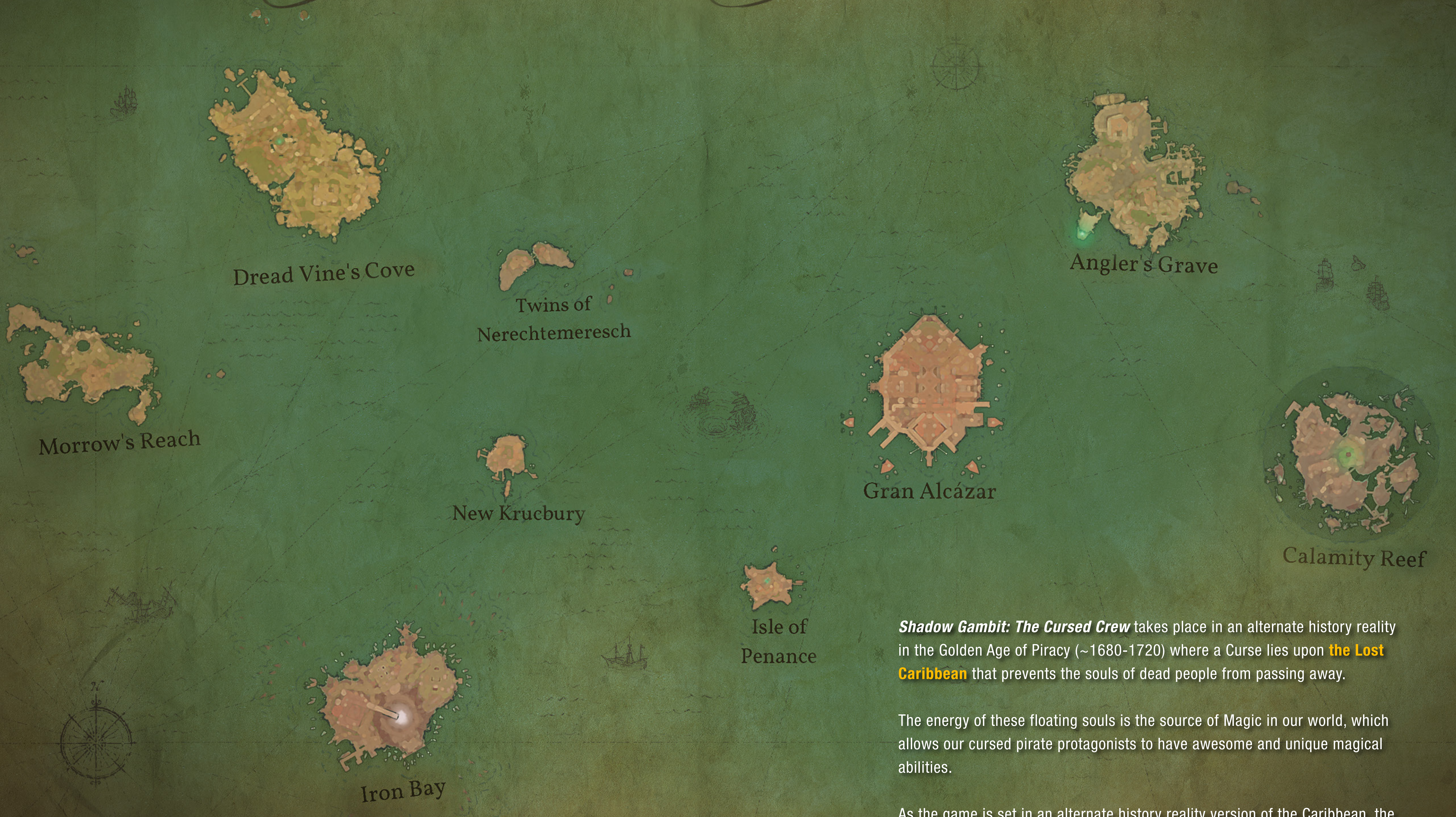
The inspiration here is quite obvious and partly in the name: The Spanish Inquisition. This means spending many hours researching the history of the real-life Spanish **Inquisition**, as well as pop culture references. We discovered that while their infamous red robes were mostly contrived by the popular Monty Python sketch, the color suits any enemy faction perfectly – and it's probably the color we would have used anyway.

We intended for the design of their clothing to show some of their cruelty and religious dogmatism, while sprinkling some fantasy elements in there too, like spiky headdresses, weapons and candles. Keep in mind that at this stage only a few details about what the Inquisition stands for and who they worship etc. had been put forward by the writers, so it had to remain rather vague.

The addition of metal helmets and masks impacted the design greatly, as from a lore perspective it takes away from each Inquisition member's individuality and humanity. Surprisingly, we were able to use most of the ideas from the very first concept sheet for months to come, using it as a reference to kick-start many future enemy types' designs.



Timeless Shores


Dread Vine's Cove
Twins of Nerechtemeresch
Angler's Grave
Morrow's Reach
Gran Alcázar
Calamity Reef
New Krucbury
Isle of Penance
Iron Bay

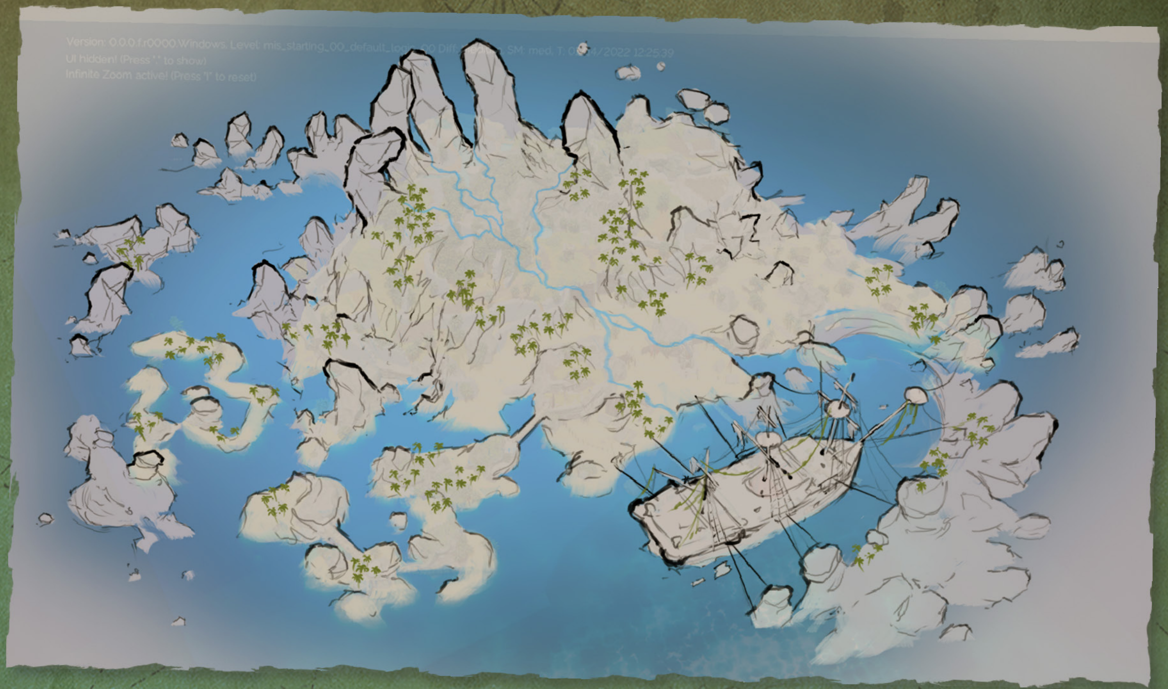
Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew takes place in an alternate history reality in the Golden Age of Piracy (~1680-1720) where a Curse lies upon **the Lost Caribbean** that prevents the souls of dead people from passing away.

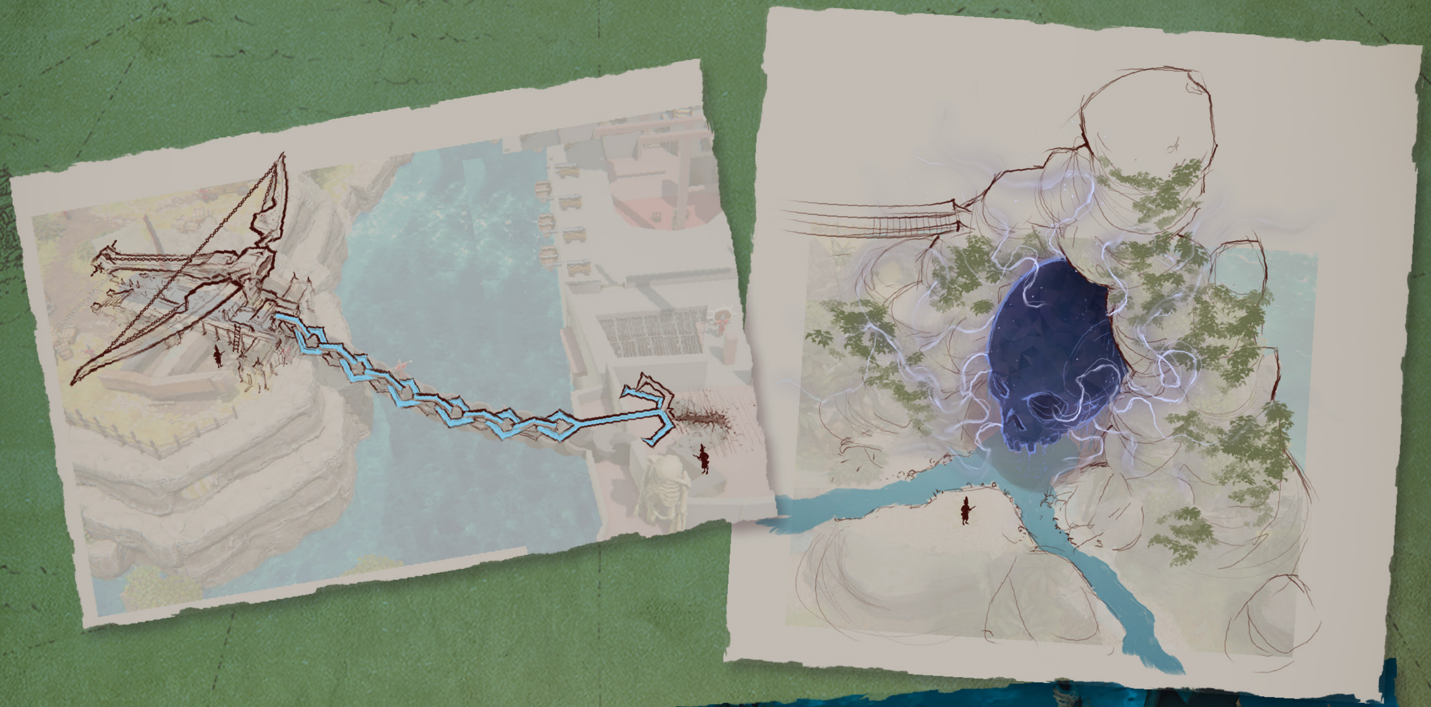
The energy of these floating souls is the source of Magic in our world, which allows our cursed pirate protagonists to have awesome and unique magical abilities.

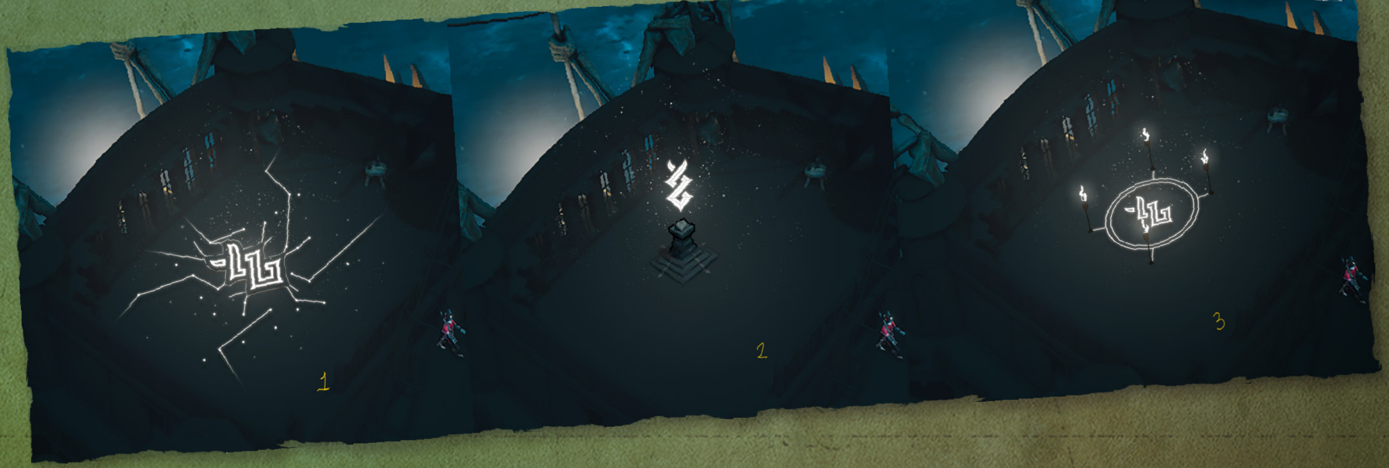
As the game is set in an alternate history reality version of the Caribbean, the locations the game plays on are not known islands but rather it's a fantasy archipelago called **The Timeless Shores** that engulfs several bigger and smaller islands.

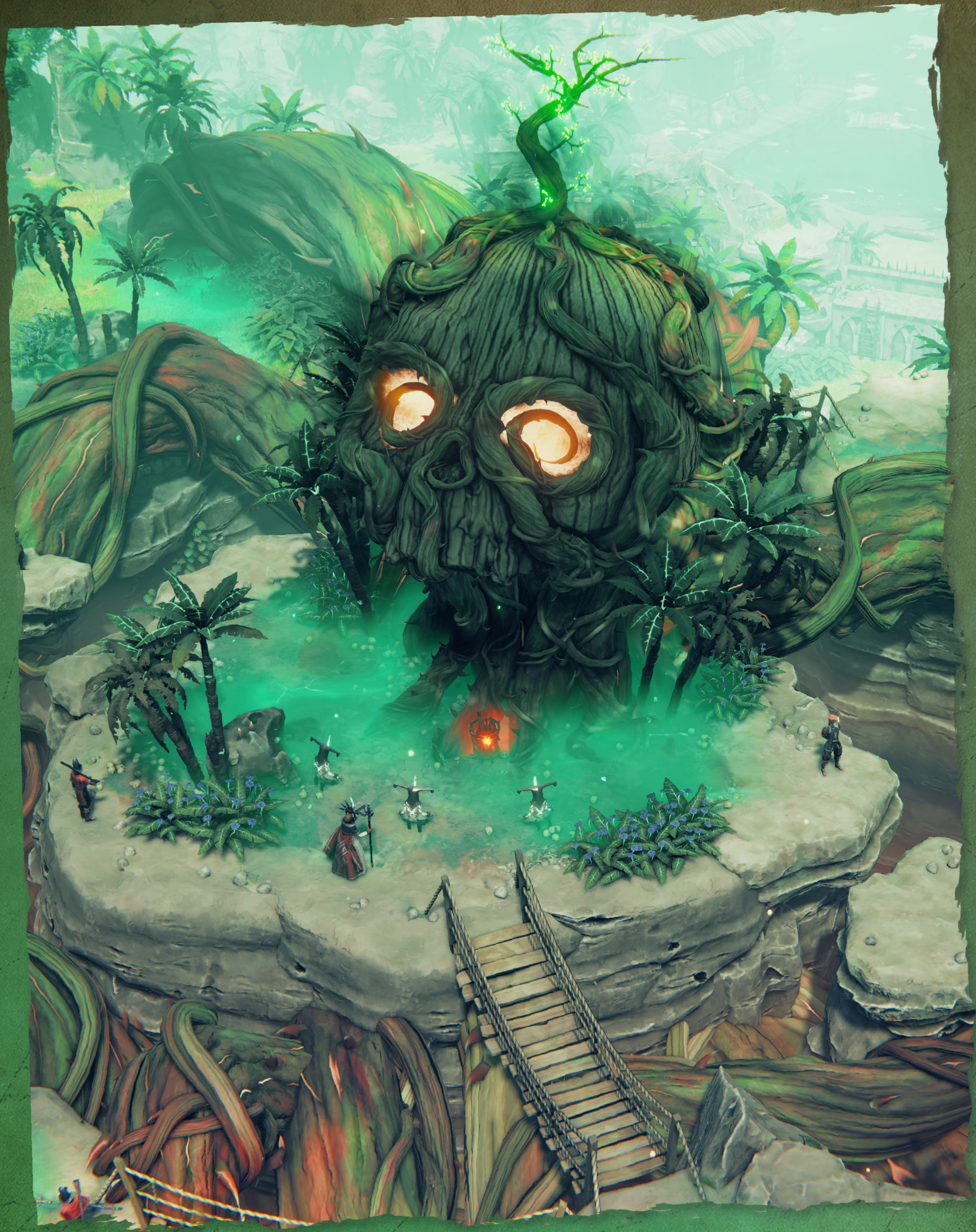
Morrow's Reach

On this inconspicuous little island, Blackeye Mordechai hid the key to his legendary treasure. Nameless ruins dot the landscape, testament to some long forgotten civilization. Why he chose this island, or if it held any significance to him at all, is something only time will tell.


UI hidden! (Press "." to show)
Infinite Zoom active! (Press "I" to reset)

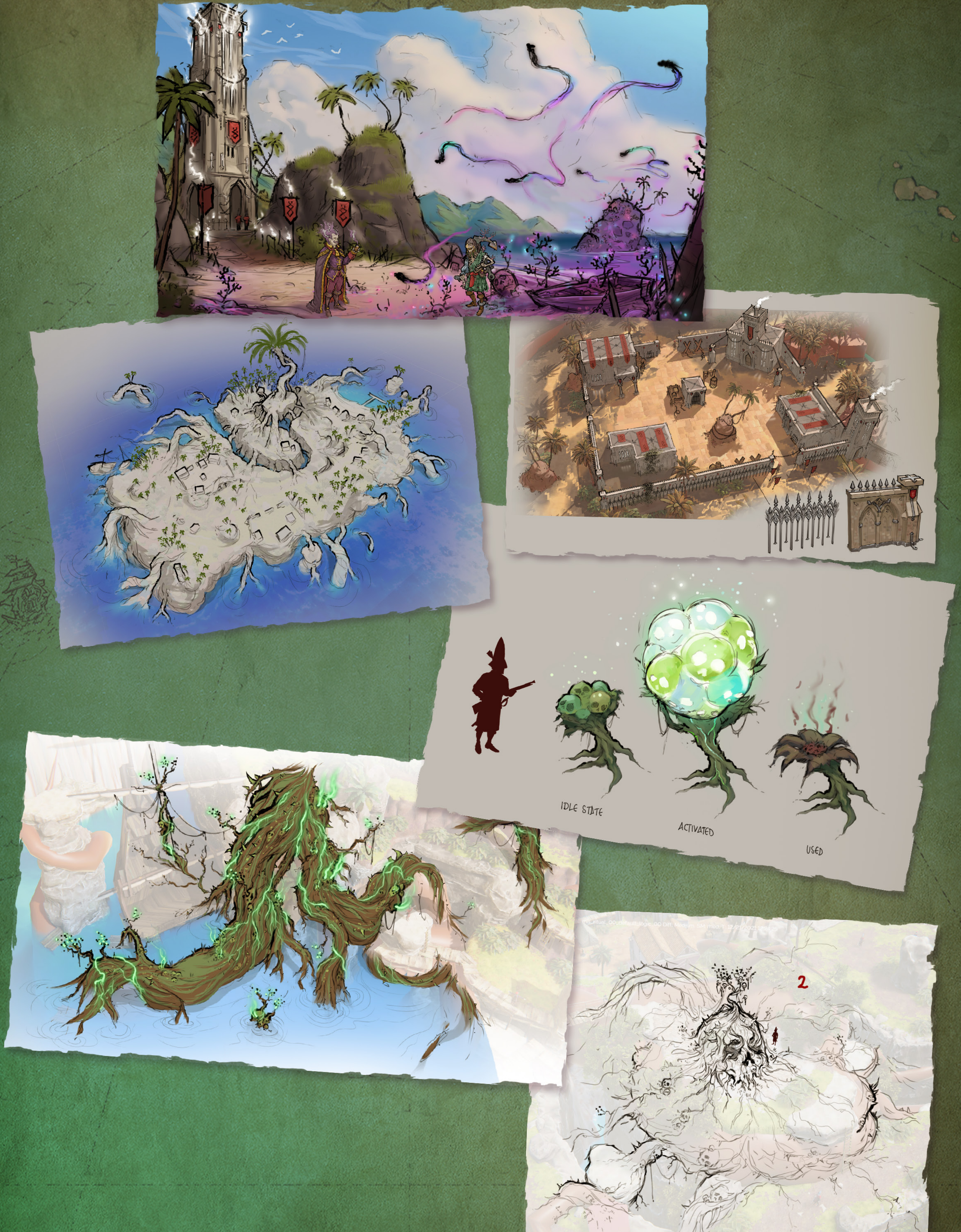






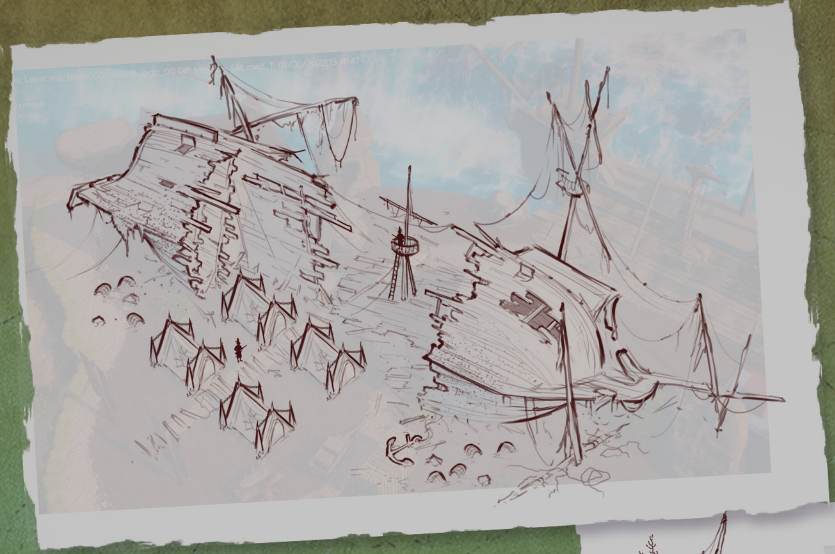
Dread Vine's Cove

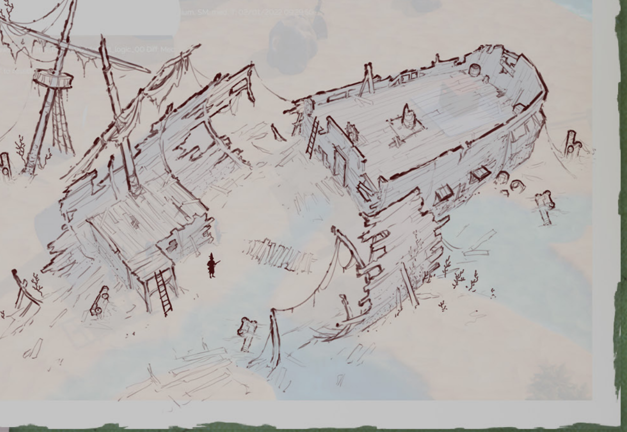
This island is the seat of the mighty Dread Vine, an eldritch plant of incredible age. It's gigantic divide span from shore to shore, dividing the land. The **Inquisition** has laid claim to the island, prodding and dissecting the Dread Vine even as it entangles their structures and feeds on their souls.

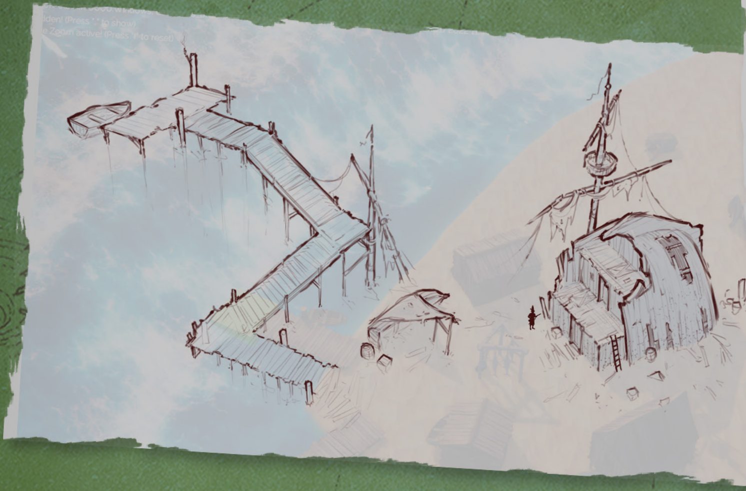


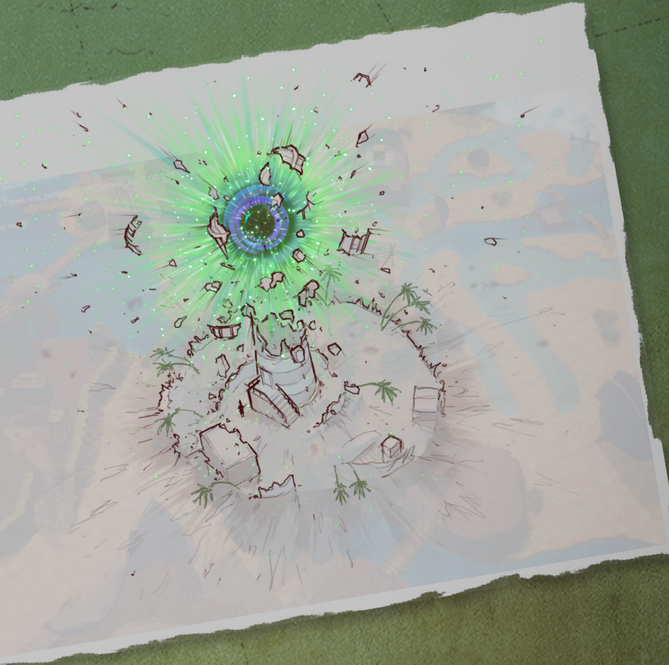
Calamity Reef

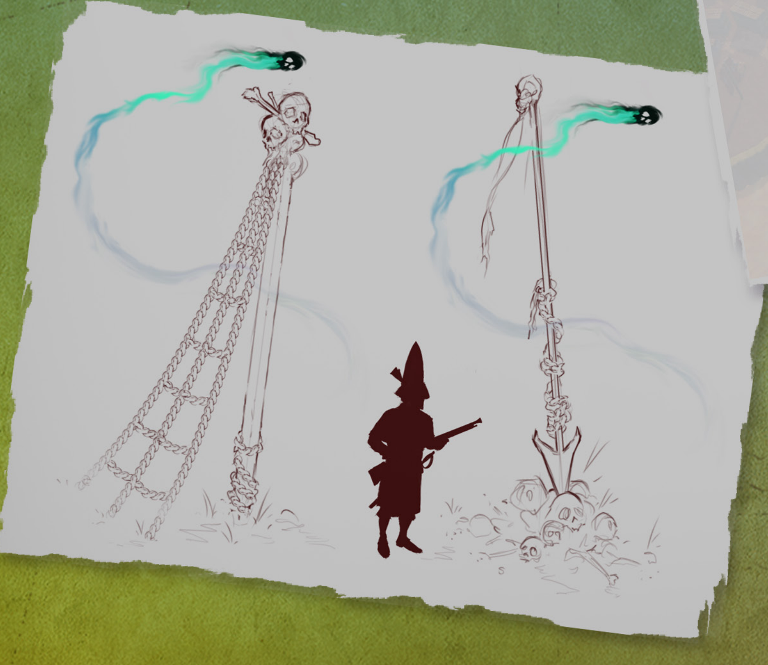
When Blackbeard unleashed his wrath against the Third Iron Fleet, the raw energy twisted Calamity Reef beyond reason. Now haunted shipwrecks litter the exposed seafloor and remnants of the dead wander aimlessly between tidepools as the falling lighthouse's glow drives away the tides themselves.

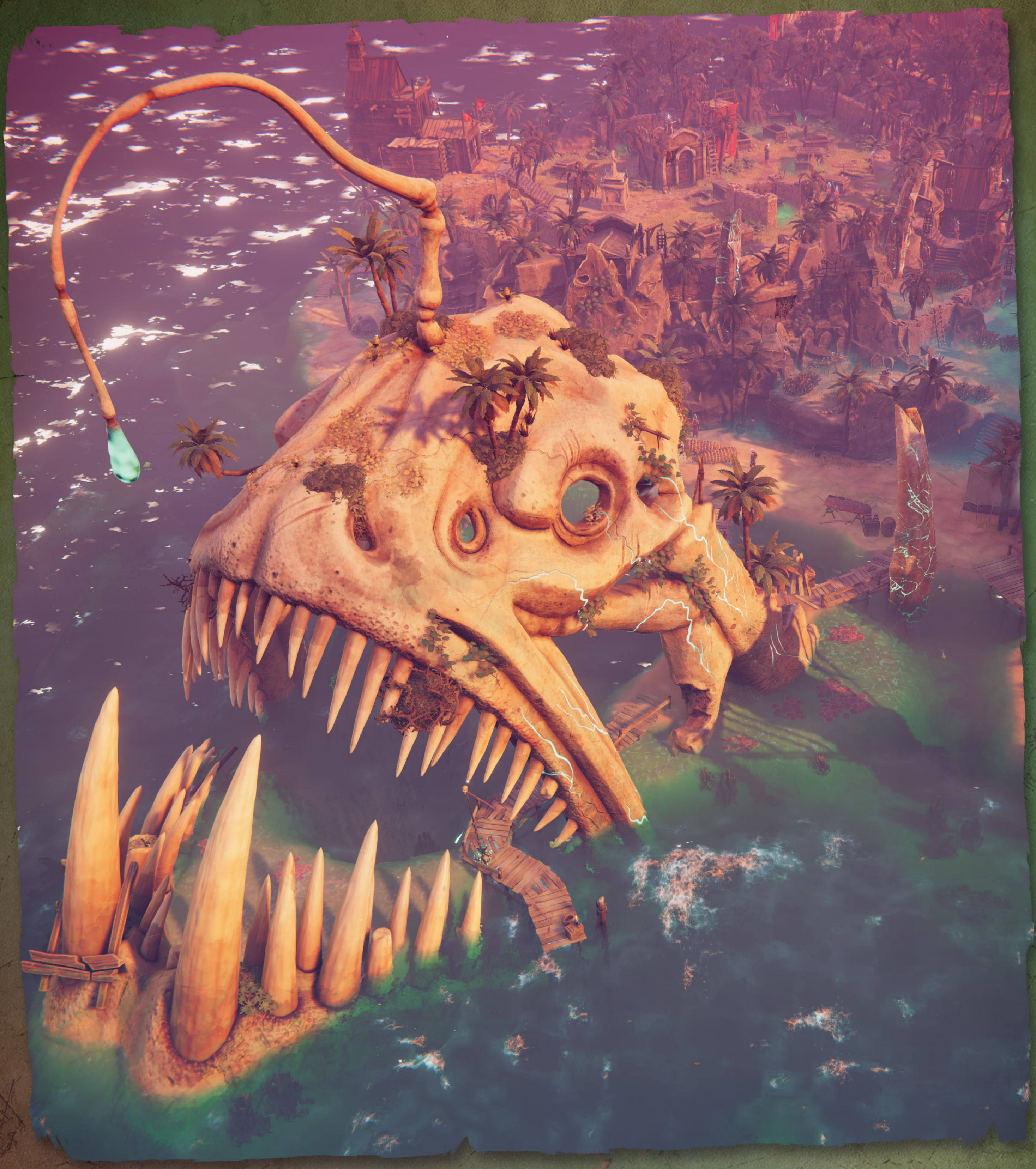






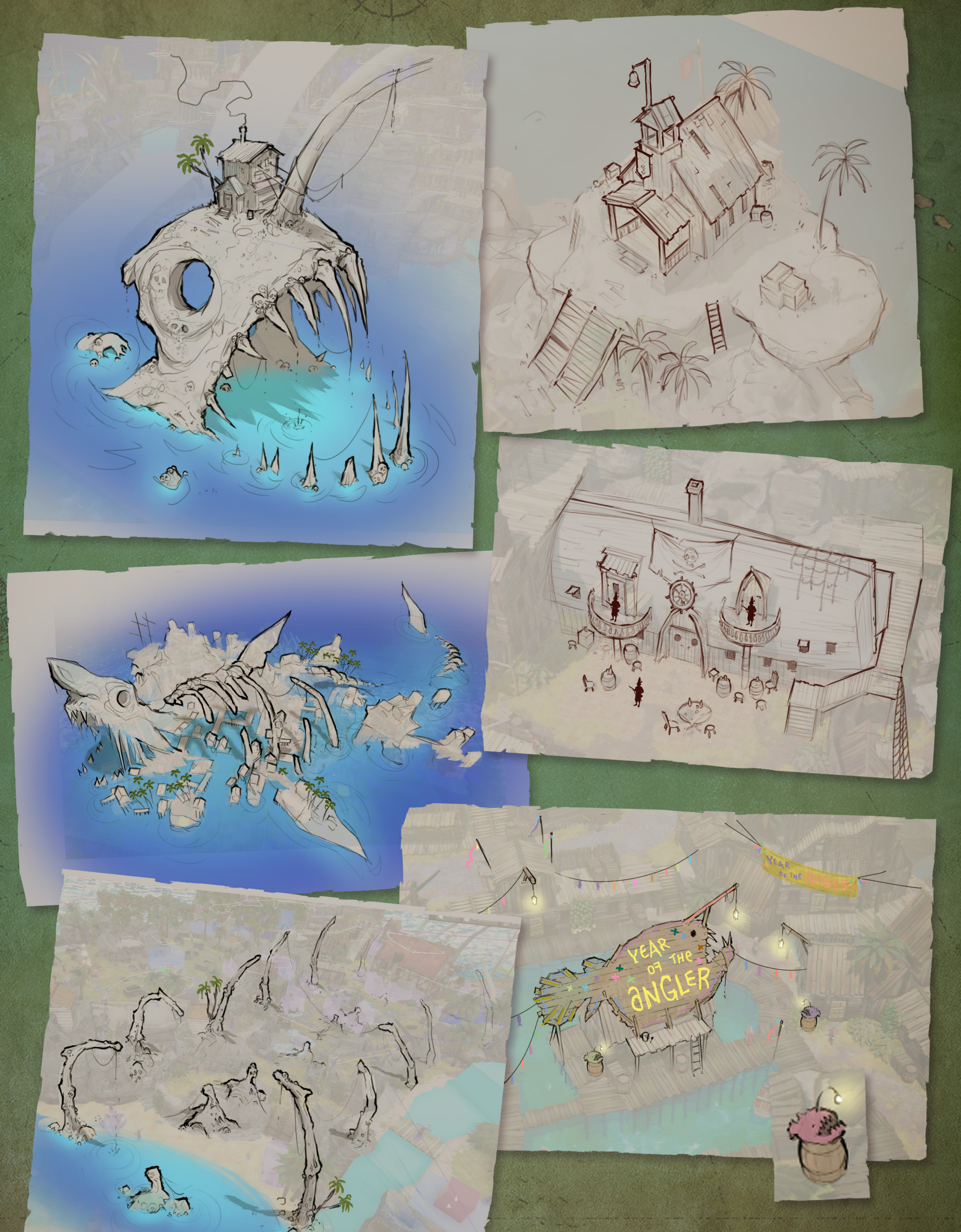


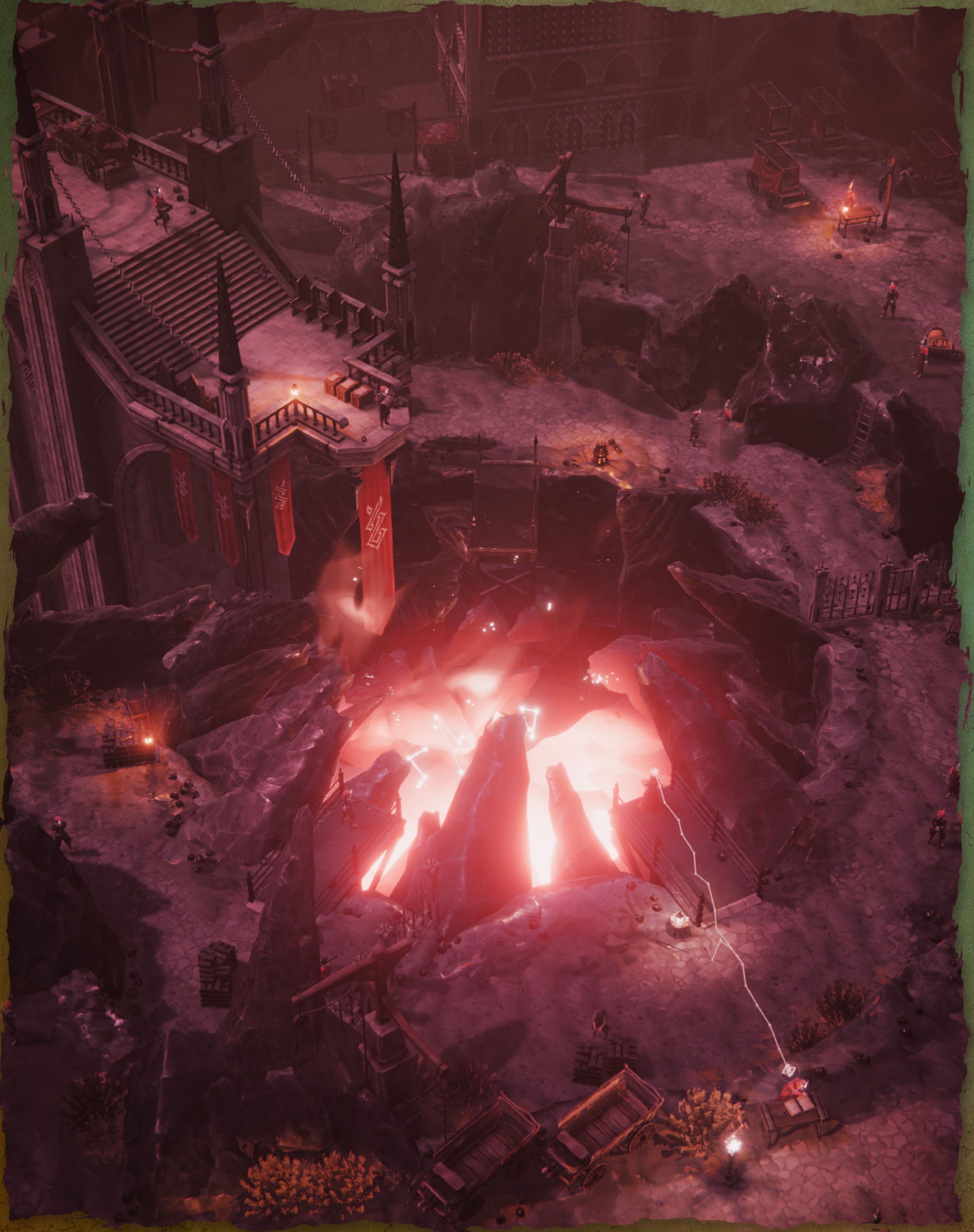


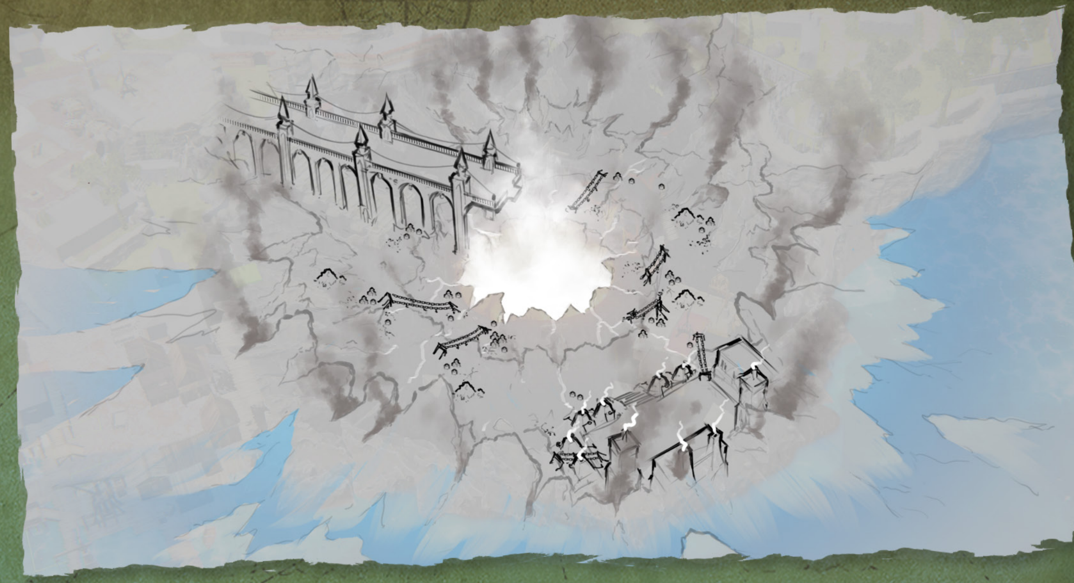


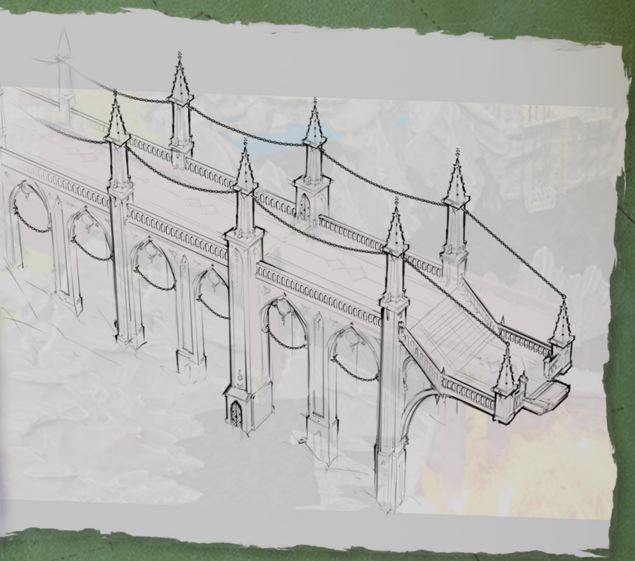
Angler's Rest

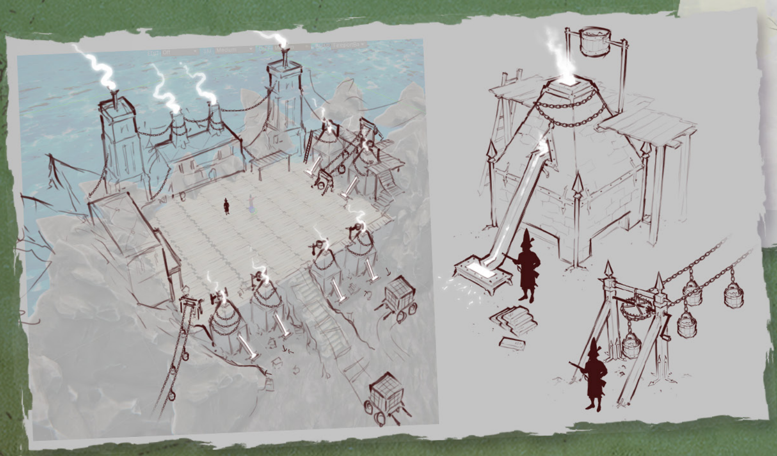
Long ago, a mighty leviathan was dragged onto this island by brave and foolish hunters. Today, a shanty town thrives in the shadow of the Angler's bones, welcoming sailors and scoundrels of all kinds. The **Inquisition** has recently established a garrison here, much to the displeasure of the locals.

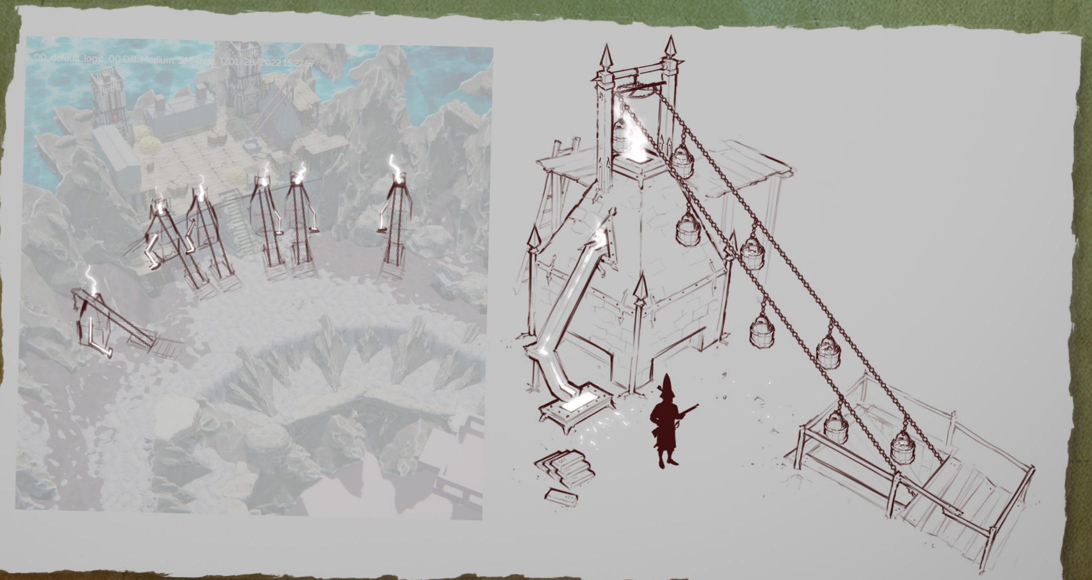






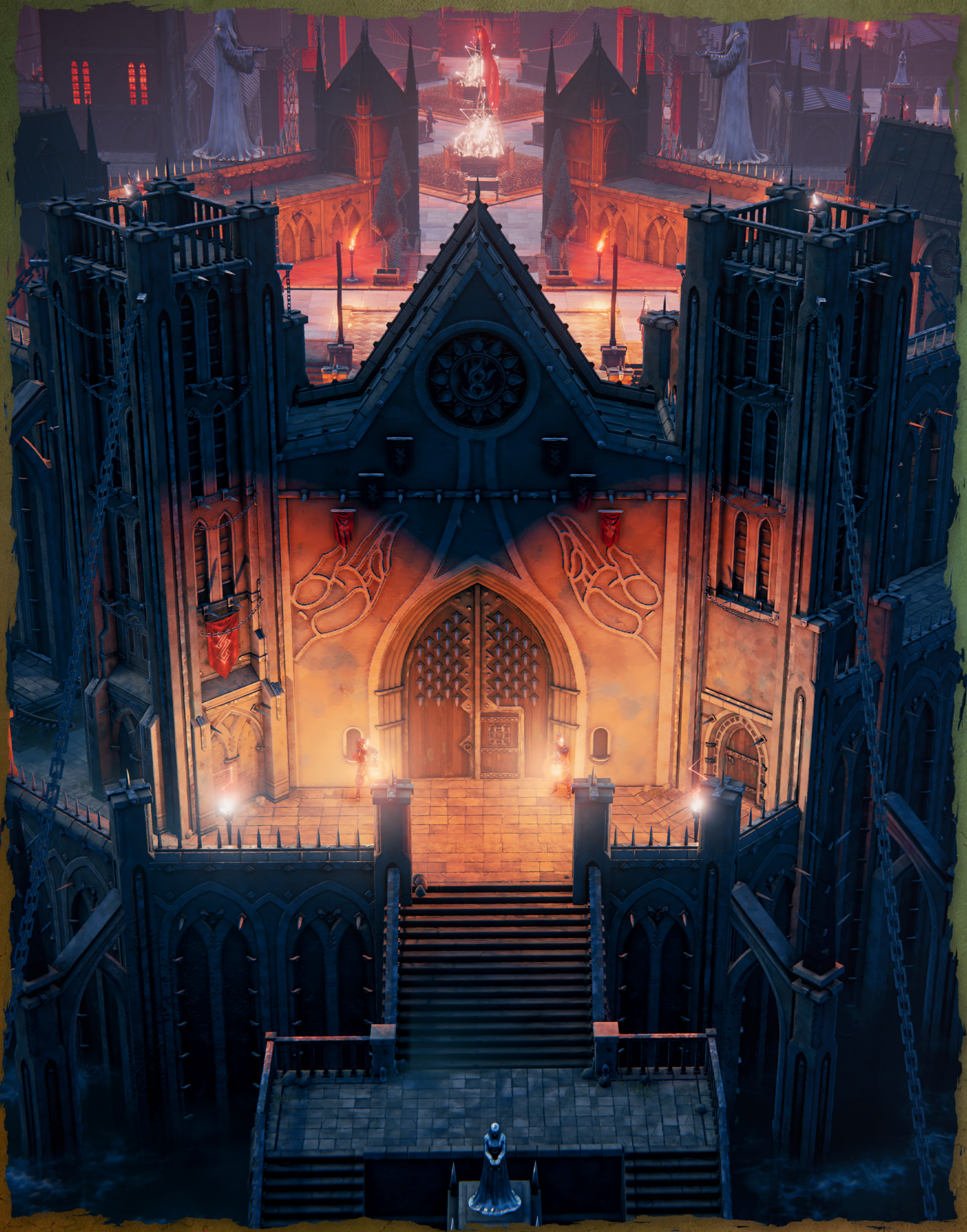






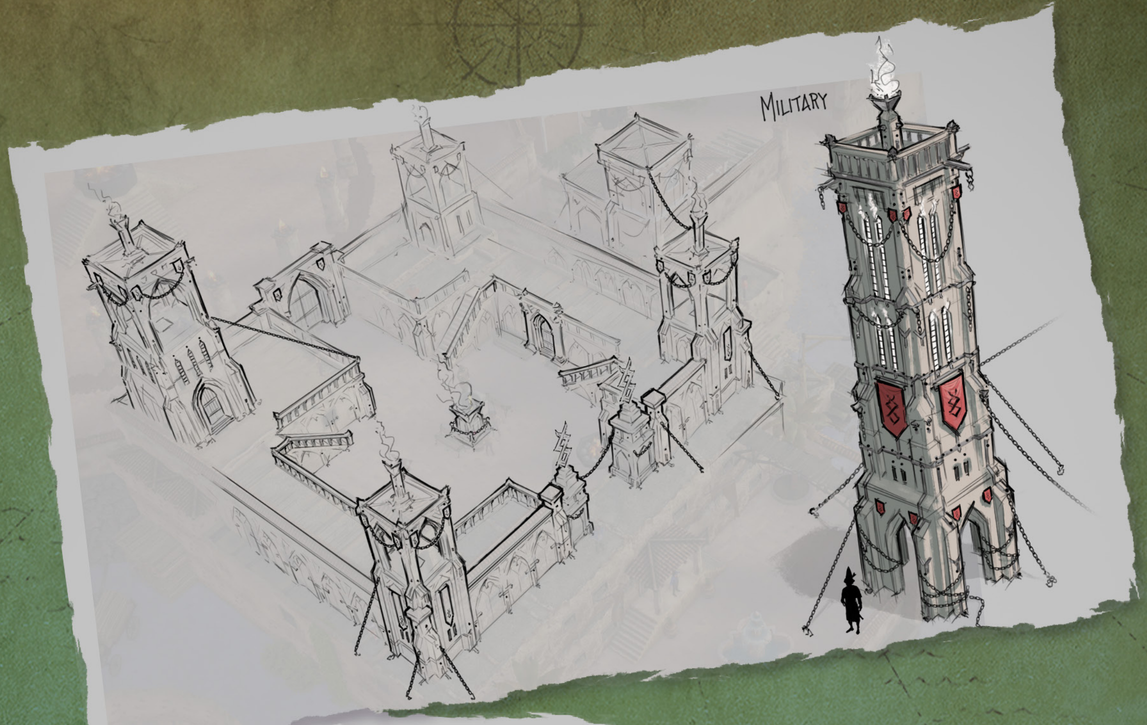
Iron Bay

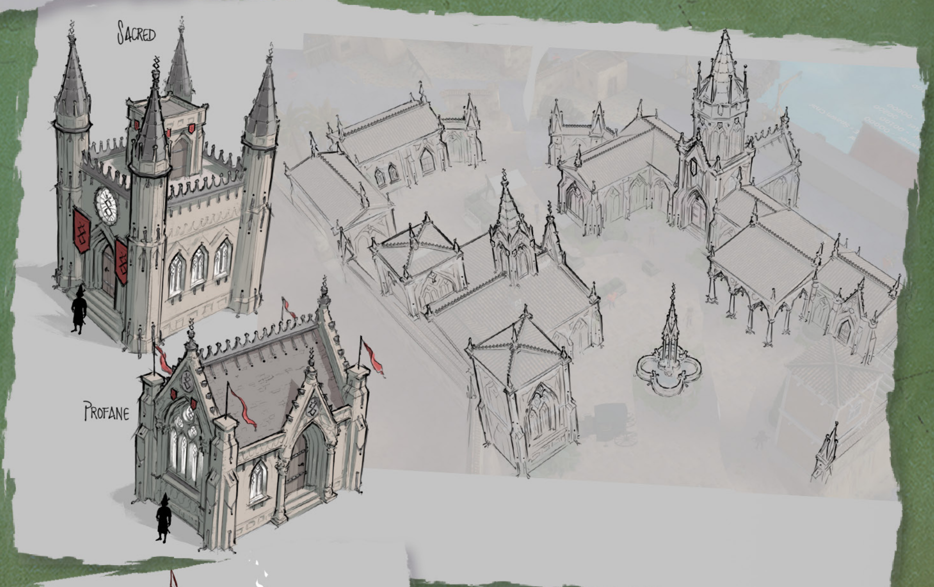
Once a haunted atoll, the Iron Bay was transformed into a blazing furnace by the **Inquisition's** divine alchemists. Now anything or anyone touched by the Curse is brought here to be scrutinized and cleansed, either by doing penance in the tunnels, or through the roaring fire of the purification pit.

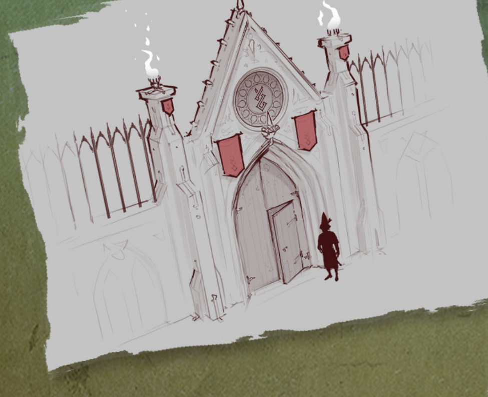


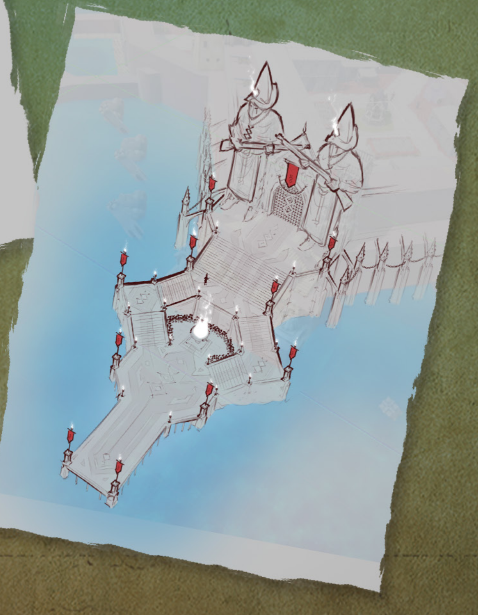
Gran Alcázar

This Inquisition fortress is a bleak insight into the world the zealots envision. Every stone has been arranged to conform with the Grand Design. Pilgrims arrive here daily to pray at the open cathedral, though ever since Ignacia has taken up residence, Gran Alcázar remains closed to them





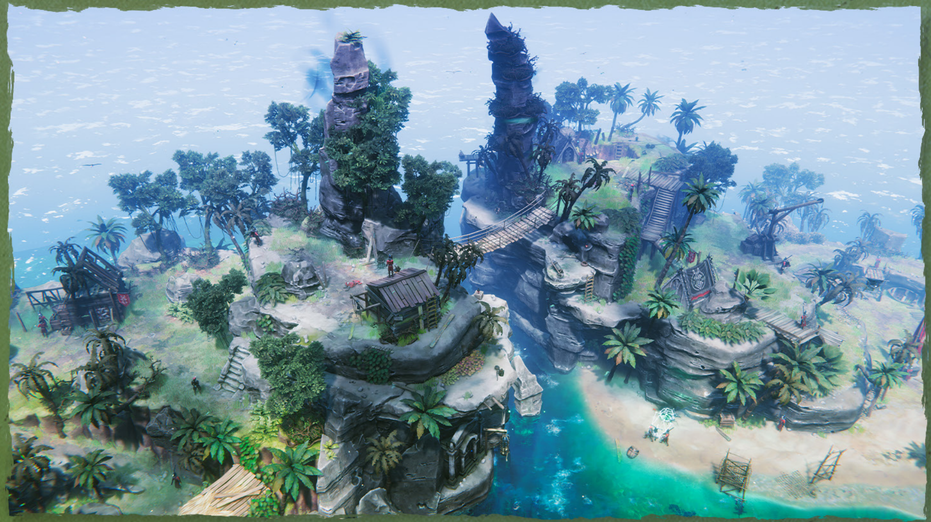




Small Islands

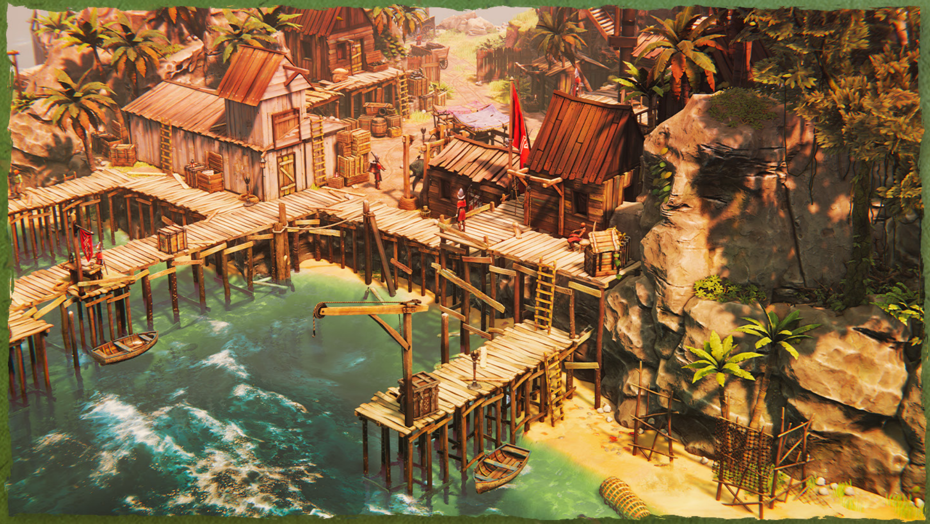
Twins of Nerechtemeresch

This charming little island is haunted by the powerful souls of long dead siblings. The twins are quite mad and delight in reducing visitors to their personal playthings, like the hapless Inquisition forces stationed here. They no doubt came up with the island's nonsensical name as well.



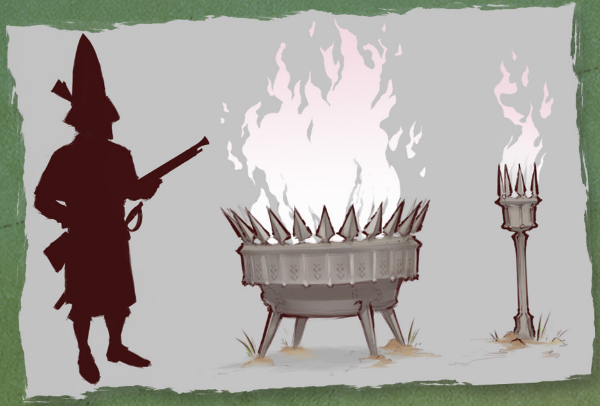
New Krucbury

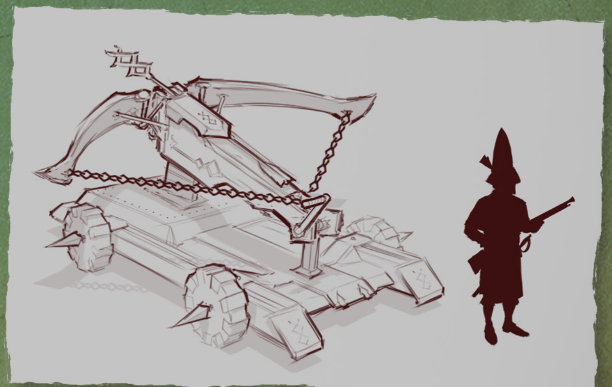
Once a haven for ships and traders of all flags, New Krucbury has recently been taken over by the Inquisition. The locals have been subjugated and the port expanded to better serve Ignacia's plans. Civilian ships may still visit, so long as their crew and cargo are not tainted by the Curse.

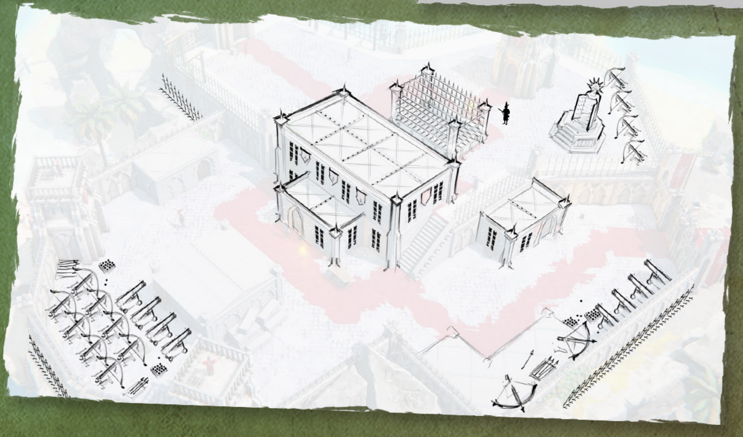


Isle of Penance

Under Inquisition law, prisoners who died before serving their full sentence a brought to places like this to complete their punishment. Their souls are put in sacred urns and entombed in the belly of the fortress. Some have been held here for over a century, long driven mad by their imprisonment.







MAKING OF...

ART STYLE

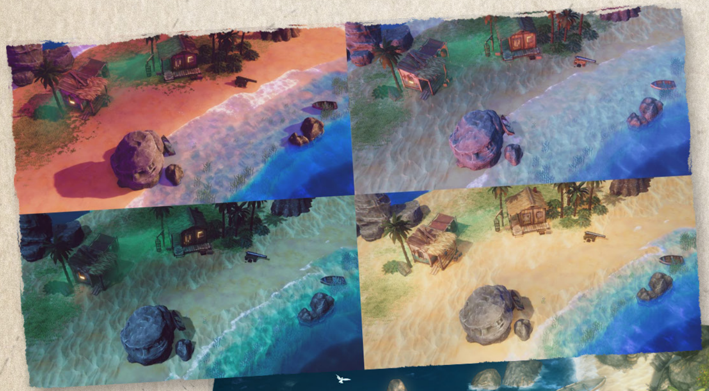
Naturally finding a new art style for a new game involved a lot of planning and research. During Preproduction we worked on several ideas and art styles for different pitches. Already during this time a lot of tests and ideas drifted towards more stylized art styles. When starting to work on Shadow Gambit's art style we first tried to analyze both the strengths and shortcomings of our previous art styles in Shadow Tactics and Desperados III.

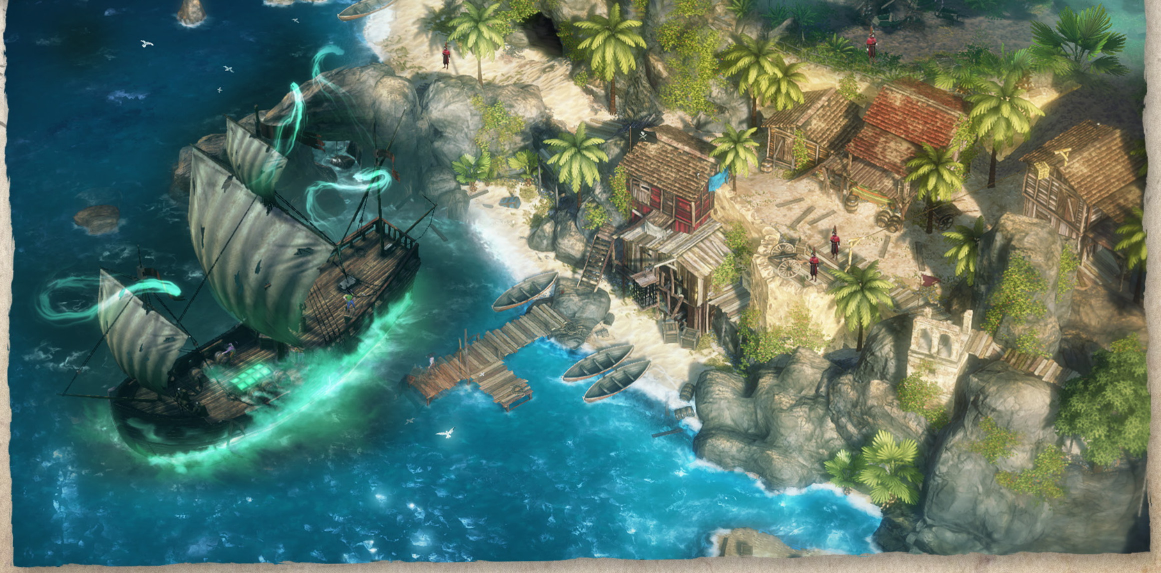
Additionally we just looked at a huge amount of other media, be it pirate games, isometric games or even movies and paintings to just get ideas from everywhere.

We had a lot of meetings in the early phase, where we just sat together with mood boards filled to the brim with screenshots and artworks and going over every little detail.

What we liked, be it shapes, color, mood, textures and what could be beneficial to the goals we wanted to reach with Shadow Gambit's art style. Slowly we started to get a clearer idea in which direction we wanted to go and our references started to become less broad and more specific. We started to make concepts where we were able to say 'Let's recreate this, but 3D.'

After this we did several 3D models and textures, doing a lot of iterations on those until we finally had a few assets, where we could say 'That's what our game's going to look like'.



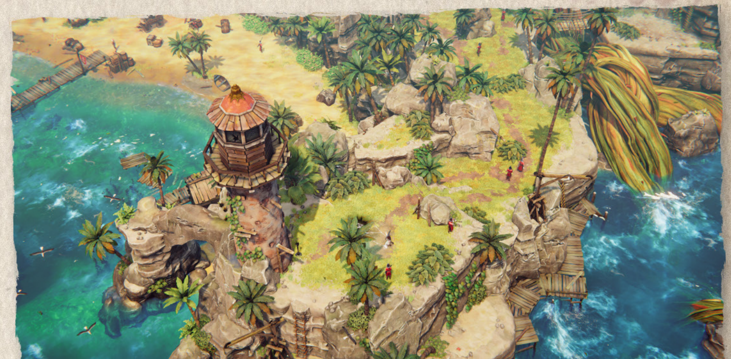


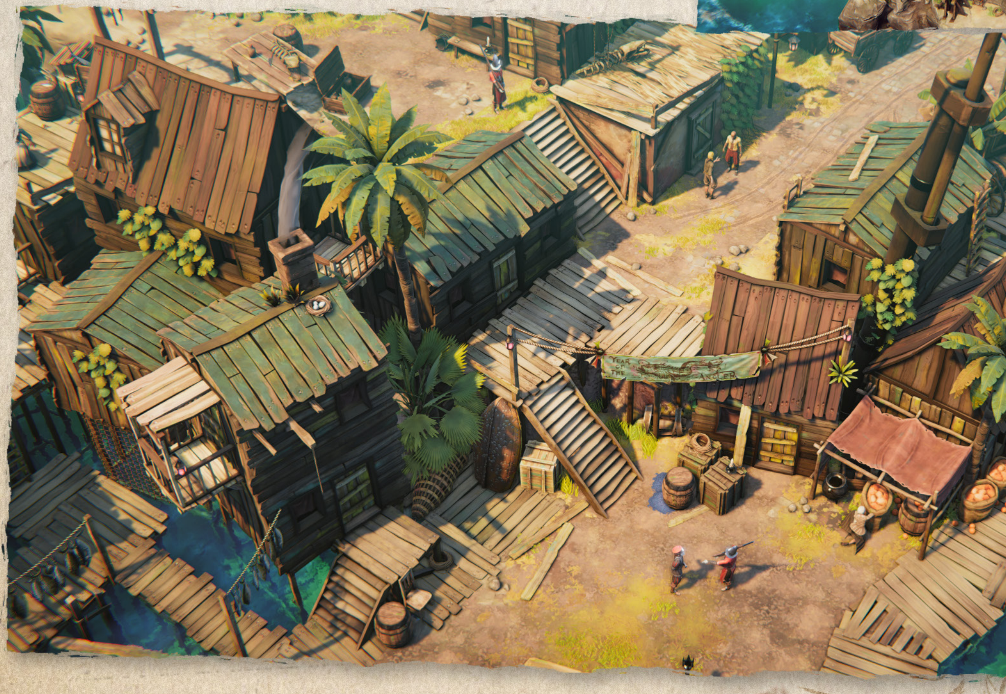
We had two main reasons as to why we changed the artstyle from Desperados III to ***Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew***. The first and biggest is readability. In our games that is one of the biggest priorities for us. While we deeply love what we did with Desperados III, we felt like it started to become too noisy. A lot of small, granular detail started to make the screens feel too crowded and

So we knew we wanted to go with an art style that enabled us to reduce the clutter and noise in everything while still looking beautiful and engaging.

During research we found that we wanted to go with a more painterly approach to everything and let bigger shapes and colors speak for themselves instead of heavily relying on a lot of detail in everything.

Looking at different pictures and paintings we always saw those beautiful, curated and saturated colors that made the important parts pop and gave everything this magical, vacation-y vibe. So for us, using a more saturated and stylized color palette to show those magical places of **the Lost Caribbean** was a match made in heaven.





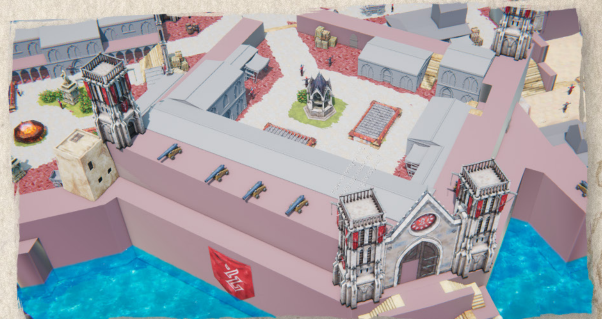
MAKING OF...

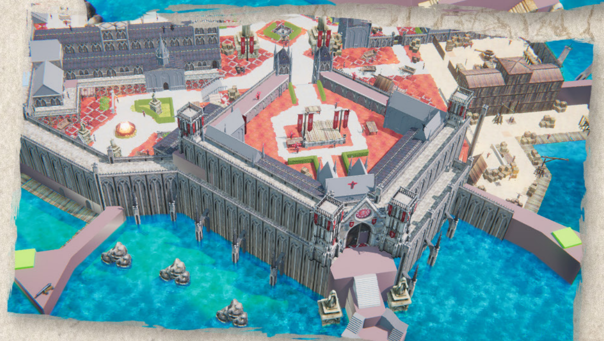
ISLAND CREATION

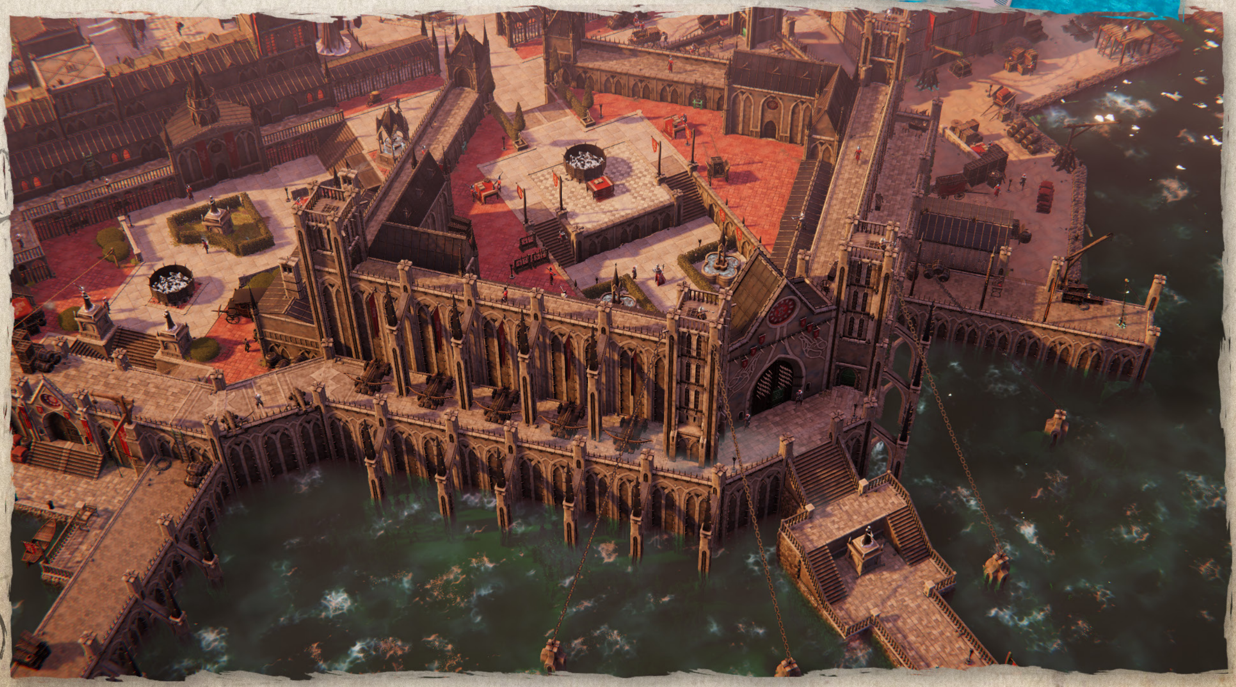
For ***Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew***, we created a whole ocean full of the strangest and most amazing islands. After pitching and discussing a ton of ideas, we settled for the ones, that would best tell the tale of the backdrop for our game, aspiring to give each island its own unique character and magical twist. We built the islands in close collaboration between Environment Art and Level Design.

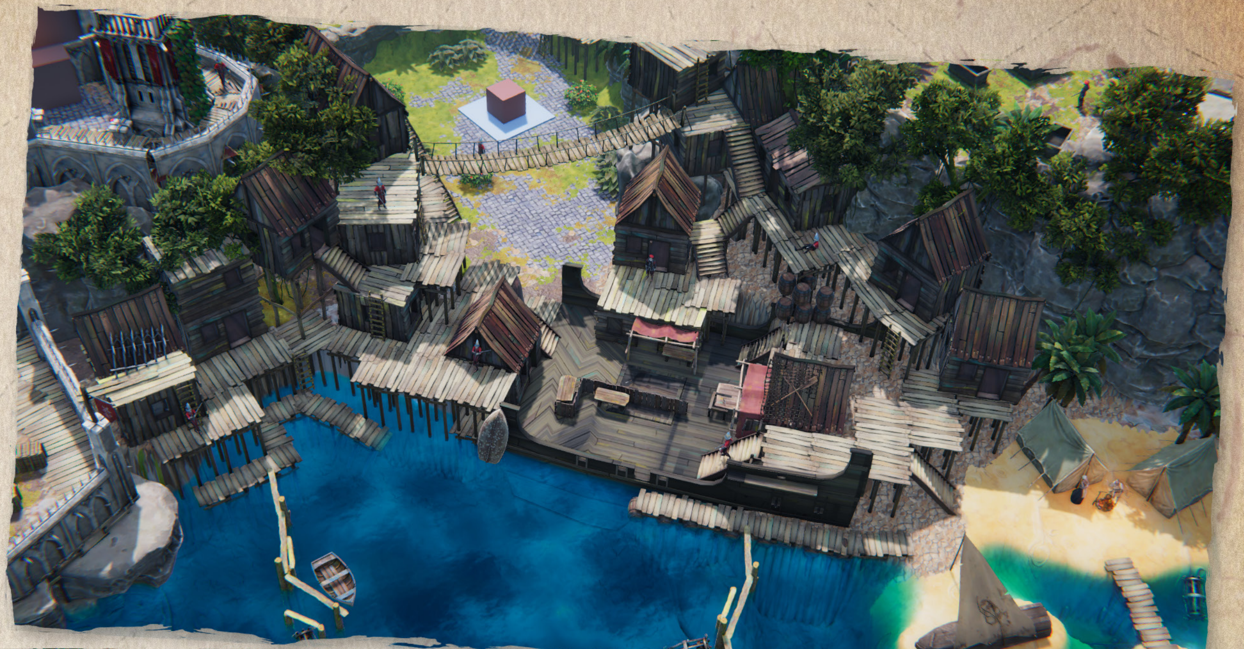
While the artist initially focusses on designing a visually believable and awe-inspiring space starring impressive landmarks like exploding lighthouses or giant roots, the level designer would tackle it from the strategic side: Creating areas with varied and memorable gameplay, like a steep wall for a focus on vertical navigation or a beach with shallow water for footprint and noise complicating stealthy approaches.

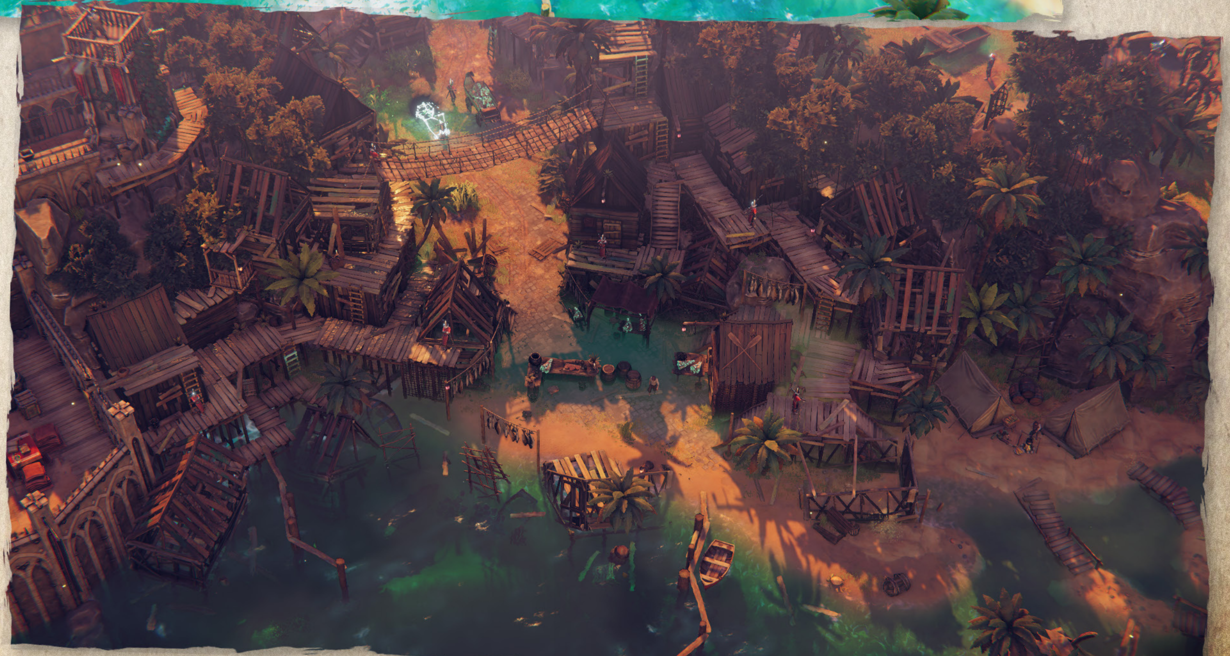
Both concepts coming together, the very first draft of the island is born. From it, a first 3D blocking is created in-engine, and over the span of some months, iteration after iteration, the bonding between gameplay and area themes gets refined to the fun-to-play and great-to-look-at locations.









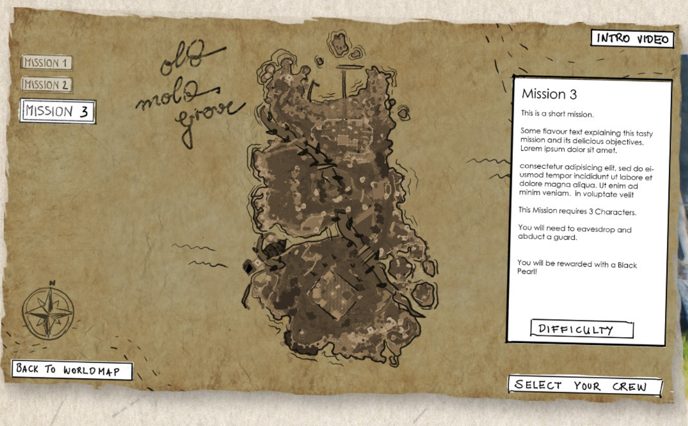


MAKING OF...

USER INTERFACE

One or our goals was to make the HUD (head-up display) more modular, so that we could for example support different amounts of characters of skills more easily. For that reason the individual elements are more detached than before.

Another big change and challenge was the implementation of a lot of VFX that you can see in the moving backgrounds or different button states. We wanted to induce magic into the interface as well.


INTRO VIDEO
MISSION 1
MISSION 2
MISSION 3
old mole grove
DIFFICULTY
BACK TO WORLDMAP
SELECT YOUR CREW

Mission 3

This is a short mission.

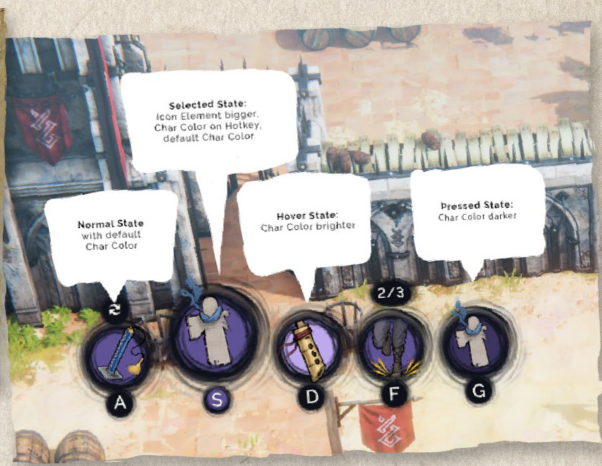
Some flavour text explaining this tasty mission and its delicious objectives. Lorem ipsum dolor sit amet.

consectetur adipisicing elit, sed do eiusmod tempor incididunt ut labore et dolore magna aliqua. Ut enim ad minim veniam. In voluptate velit

This Mission requires 3 Characters.

You will need to eavesdrop and abduct a guard.

You will be rewarded with a Black Pearl!


Normal State
with default
Char Color
Selected State:
Icon Element bigger,
Char Color on Hotkey,
default Char Color
Hover State:
Char Color brighter
Pressed State:
Char Color darker
2/3
A
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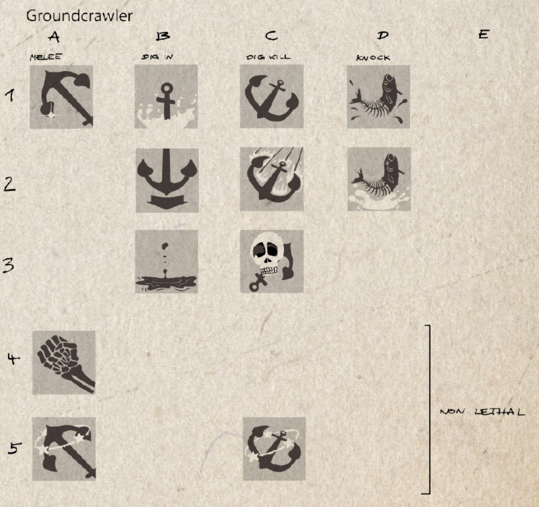
Groundcrawler
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B
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MELEE
DIG IN
DIG KILL
KNOCK
1
2
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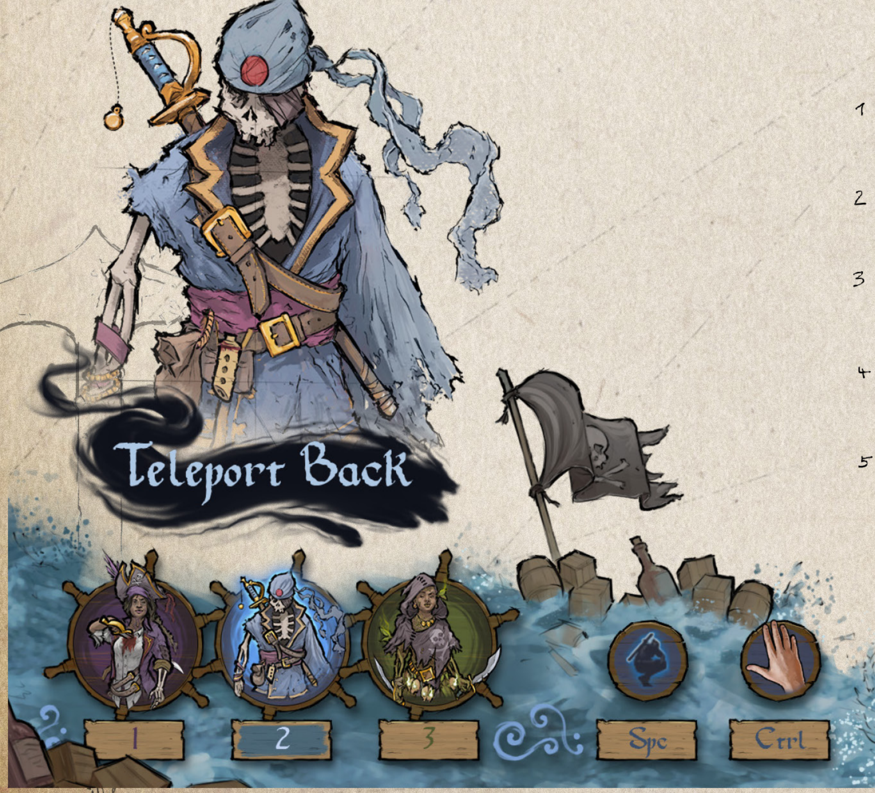
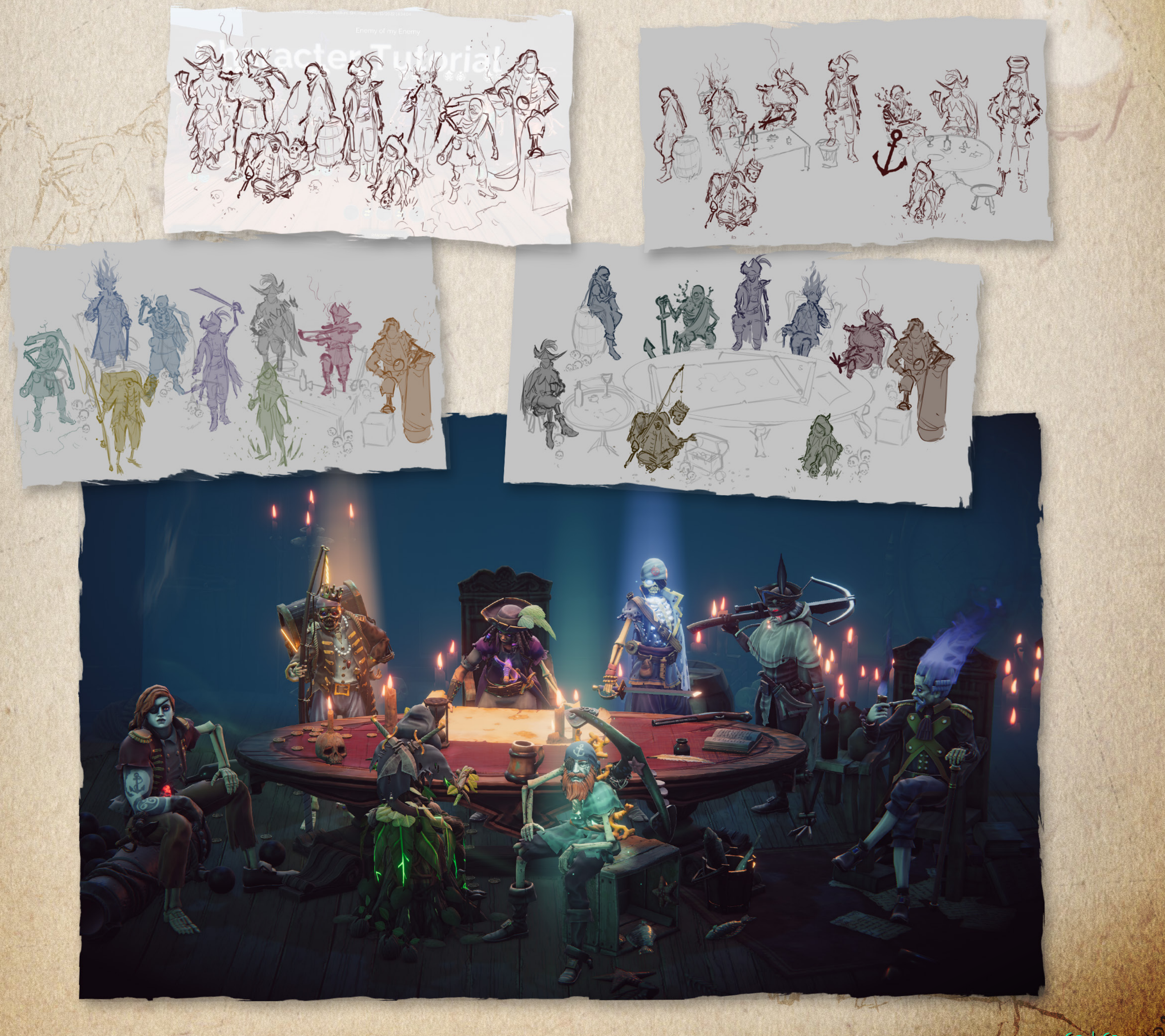
5
NON LETHAL


Teleport Back
1
2
3
Spc
Ctrl

SELECTION SCREEN

The Selection Screen allows players to choose characters for the next mission. Initially, we planned to arrange the crew horizontally in a line, but it felt too unnatural and didn‘t enhance immersion. There were also issues with fitting all characters on the screen and created a lot of unused space.

After testing, we decided to use a planning table as central element where the crew gathers around and looks at a large map. This created a more immersive and compact screen, with the camera closer to the characters. Clicking on a character makes them stand up or transition into a ready pose.

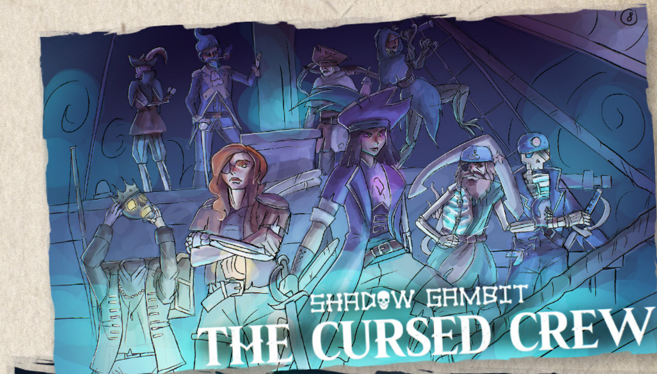

Character Tutorial

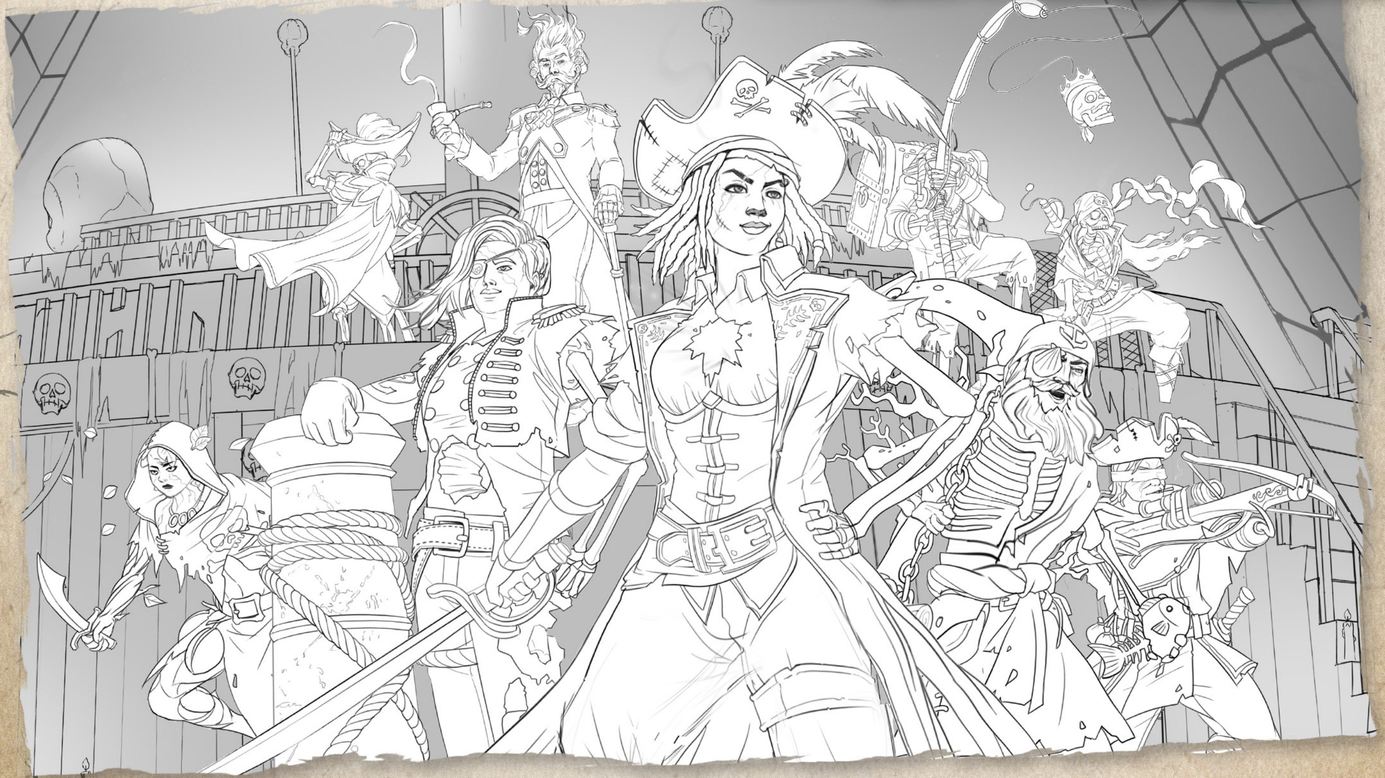
MAKING OF...

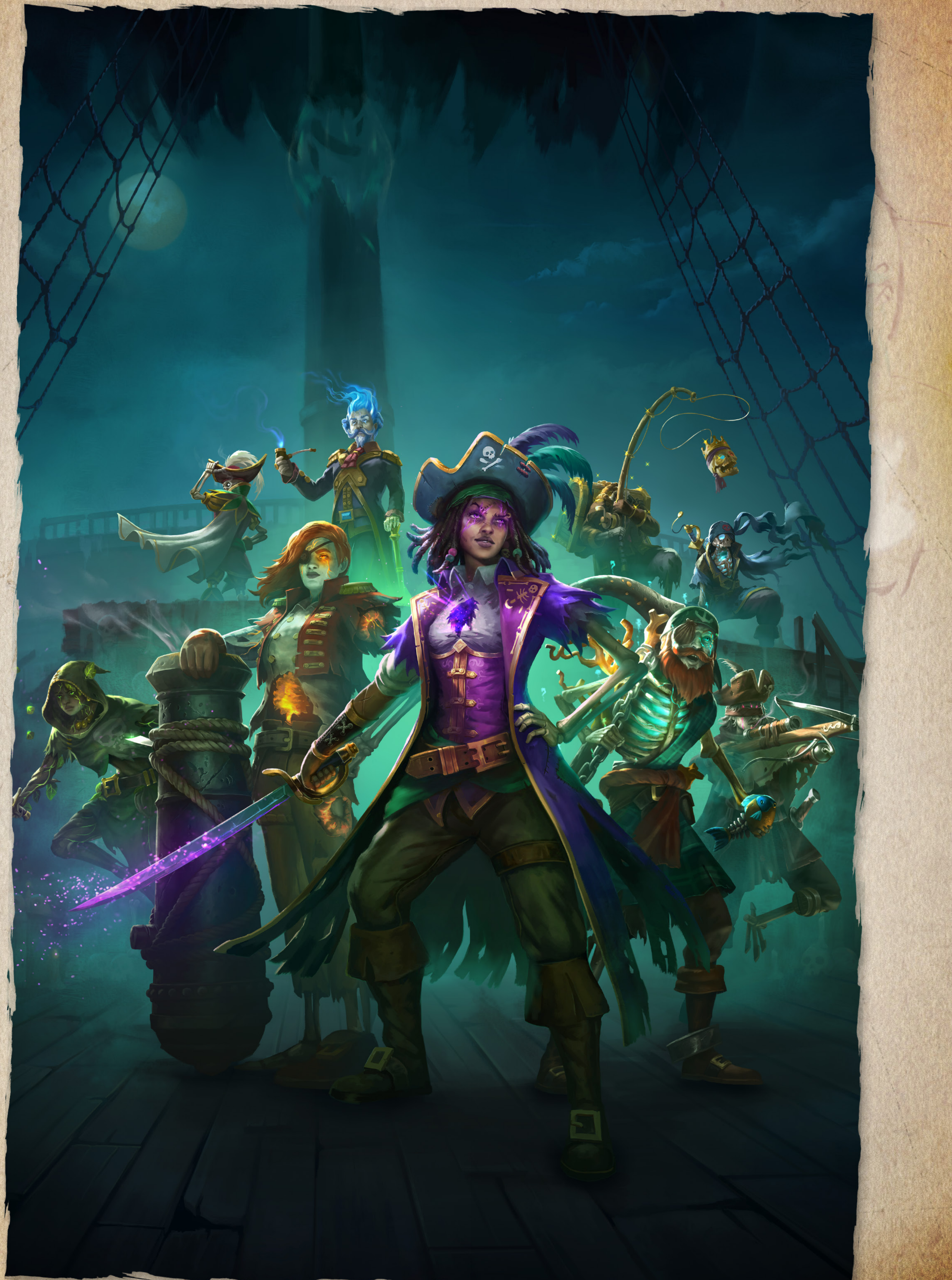
KEYART

Creating the key art for a game is always a huge challenge. In many cases, it is the first image players see of your game. It has to work well in many different formats and sizes. From a convention booth banner to a tiny thumbnail in the store page. A lot of people were involved in the creation of the key art for ***Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew***.

First, we conducted extensive research to determine the key art's requirements for the promotional activities and stores. Finding the right mood, character arrangement, and color scheme was crucial in capturing the essence of our game. After several discussions and brainstorming sessions, we finally found what we were looking for and did a rough sketch ourselves which was then transformed into a 3D representation. For the final key art production we collaborated with Polar Engine, an external studio, who worked closely with us through several iterations.





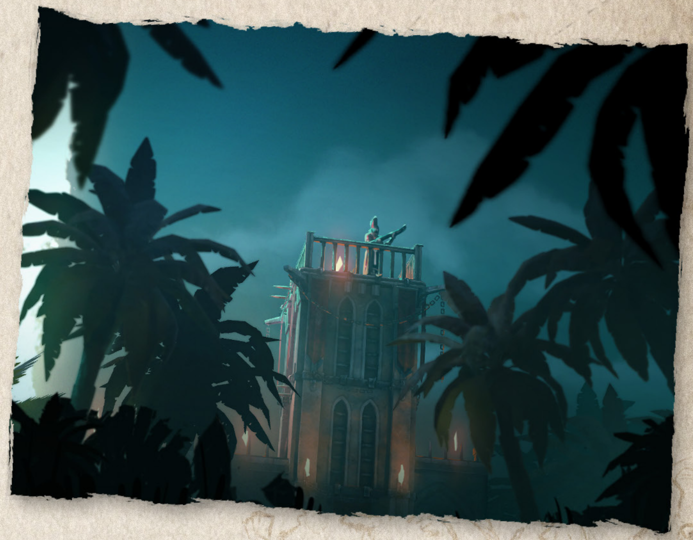


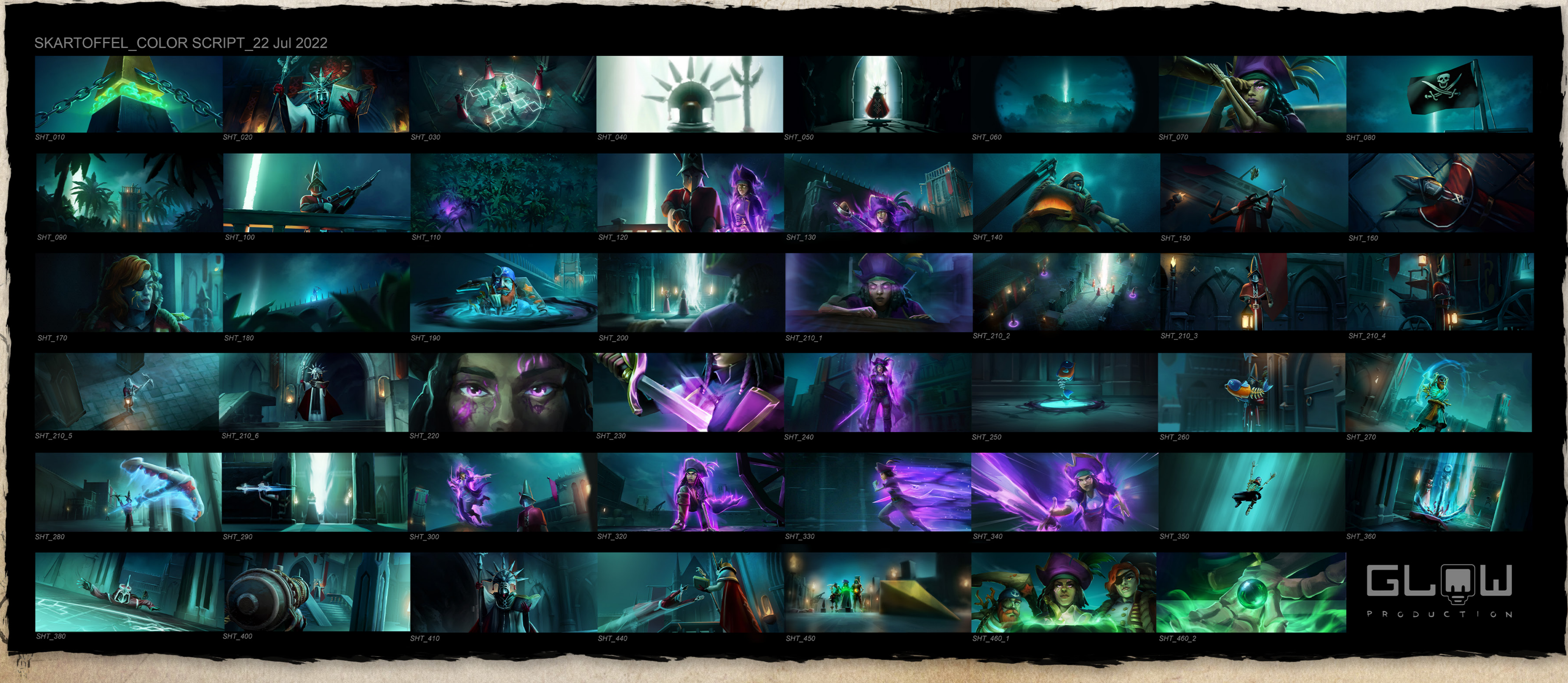
MAKING OF...

CINEMATIC TRAILER

Creating the cinematic reveal trailer for ***Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew*** was an exciting 10-month journey. It first involved brainstorming story ideas, sketching storyboards by drawing simple stick figures, and drafting an initial script. With the help of talented cinematic director Régis Raffin, the script was revised, and an animatic and 3D previz were created to get the timing, vibe and shots of the trailer just right before going into the full production.

After an extensive bidding process, an animation studio (Glow Production) was chosen within our budget, and production commenced. The artists and animators (also involving motion capturing) worked diligently to bring the trailer to life, followed by editing, sound effects, and an original score by the audio team.




SKARTOFFEL_COLOR SCRIPT_22 Jul 2022
SHT_010
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SHT_360
SHT_380
SHT_400
SHT_410
SHT_440
SHT_450
SHT_460_1
SHT_460_2
GLOW
PRODUCTION

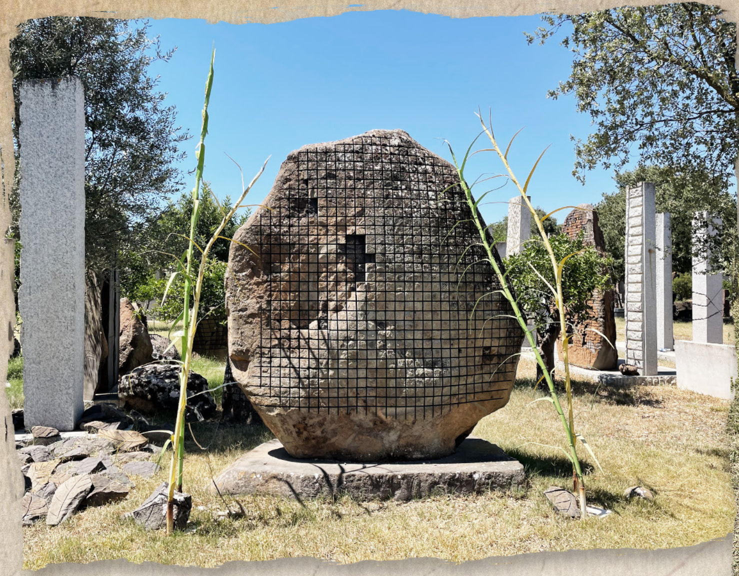
MAKING OF...

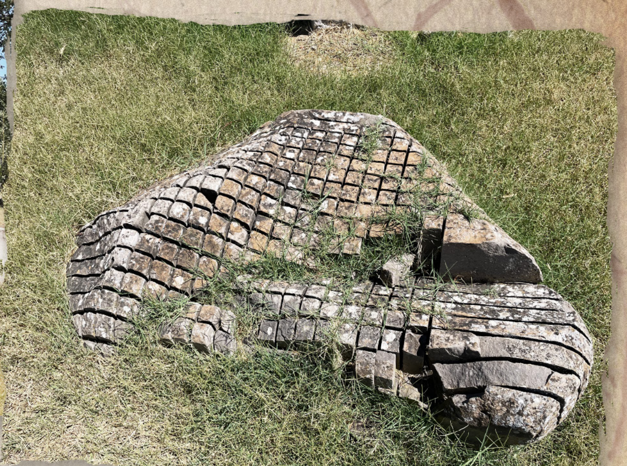
MUSIC & SOUND

As soon as the setting for Shadow Gambit became clear, we identified its musical world by starting with a “Creative Month” as we did for our earlier games.

This first effort bore several fruits: we identified the Inquisition with instruments like the harpsichord, organ, and most of all, the use of vocals that borrow some elements from plainchant. We wanted to include more voice in the game in the form of traditional sea shanties as well as during the instrumental parts to make sure the contrast between cursed pirates and Inquisition was clear and exciting to listen to.

Also, after the creative month the prominence of the Hurdy Gurdy, especially the ghostly sounding Bass Hurdy, which became the Red Marley’s, the main instrument for when players come back from the missions to sail on the high seas, had been set in stone. We were ready to go!





In the summer of 2022, our composer Filippo Beck Peccoz spent some time on the island of Sardinia and got to know the work of artist Pinuccio Sciola. He created sculptures out of Sardinian stones, but with one truly unique feature. By cutting the stones deeply with specialized equipment, Sciola was able to create stones that produce sound when “played” with a bow, or by rubbing one’s hand upon them. Filippo was instantly mesmerized by a sound unlike anything else he’d heard since then and asked the artist’s foundation (Sciola passed away in 2016) if we could integrate the sounding stones into the game.

Luckily, they loved ***Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew*** and we were able to collaborate, resulting in Red Marley’s hold carrying a bit of Sardinian magic within it – something we are very proud of!

The Main Theme for our game has traditionally been the first big statement and a foreshadowing of what to expect in the rest of the soundtrack. The same applies to Shadow Gambit’s Theme: the Pirates’ ghostly groove clashes against the rigidity of the Inquisition in one energetic tour-de-force. To bring Ignacia, the main villain, we’ve worked with renown singer Julie Elven, who instilled an eerie tone to Ignacia’s melody.

SHADOW GAMBIT
THE CURSED CREW

Strategy Guide

About this Guide

Arrrr, there's not much that **"Shadow Gambit - The Cursed Crew"** won't tell you while playing the game. Everything you have to know is explained right there and we actually put quite some effort in exactly that. And we don't want you to feel "guided" too much. The best way to enjoy this game or type of game is still to explore and discover its possibilities while playing. And experiment a lot. We went for an overall less linear game structure and progression with many meaningful decisions for you to take along your path across the islands of **The Timeless Shores** and its hand-crafted sandbox levels. And we deliberately want you to "fail" on your missions, pushing you to trying different approaches and strategies for successfully getting through the often **difficult setups of guards**.

So how does this "strategy guide" fit in then, you may ask. Aye, it's **about the "bigger picture"**, a deep dive into the game's design and structure. And, of course, the strategies for playing and mastering it. All in a form that the game cannot account for.

The **first part** covers both the **very basics** and a more **advanced inspection of the game's mechanics and systems**. All about supporting you in **finding your own strategy** and your **own playstyle**. We start with things as basic as the iconic **viewcone**, which is as much your dominant opponent as your trusted ally. We will break down the **Cursed Crew** to their **"barebone" skills**. We take a closer look at the **different types of skills** you find in the game. We look at how **single playable characters combine and master their individual skills**, but also how these **skills combine with those of other characters** you unlock over the course of the game. We go into **effective strategies** that distract and isolate **guards** from the often difficult setups in order to **reduce** them to a size you can actually manage quite well. One that can be overcome in a final strike. We talk about how to use **Shadow Mode** and its **powerful pause option** for that. And of course you also have to know who you are up against and we will cover **all the guards of the Inquisition** and their respective skill-sets in some detail.

With the **first part all being about strategies** and **how to master the game**. The **second part** will walk **"ship"** you through **The Timeless Shores**, its **islands** and the **missions you encounter** there, including the **different types of missions**. We "map out" the game for you, providing overview and structure. It **won't be a step-by-step "walkthrough"** of the game though. Any such thing, telling you exactly how to play *your* missions, would be against the game's vision: ***Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew*** offers you way more **freedom** than our previous entries in the stealth tactics genre. You are mostly **free to choose** which **mission to tackle** or which **island to set foot on next**, once you have discovered them on the **map**. You can then choose **different landing spots on an island** before going ashore and then choose your exit at the end, choose your way back to your **ship, the Red Marley**, through so-called **Tears of the Below**. Your individual path across an island always includes **different setups of guards** along your way. And with some exceptions, you are mostly free to choose which **members of the crew** to **take with you** before embarking on each mission, also depending on the **sequence you revived**, i.e. unlocked your **crewmates** over the course of the game. There's **not one way but many** and for this second part of the guide **not much "handholding"** in the sense of how to overcome guard setups in particular. **Islands and major spoilers ahead:** We will go into the **key moments, story beats and locations for each mission**, helping you find your way and overcome those climactic parts that are perhaps a bit more tricky. Or even recapture your memories once you've finished these missions, and think about playing them again in the endgame, **hunting all those badges** we've prepared for you.

Let's roll…

The Viewcone

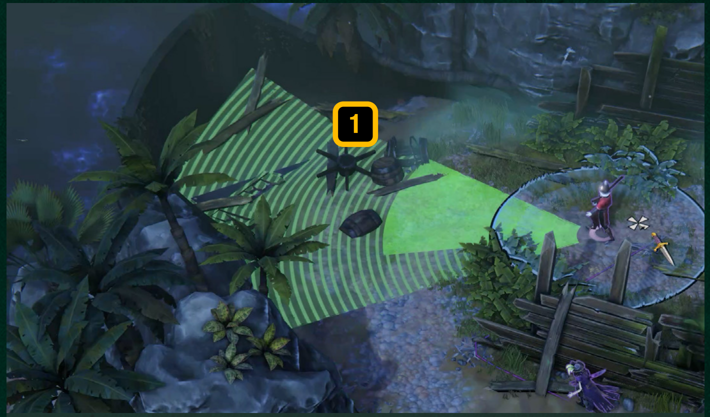
We start off with the **most iconic feature of stealth strategy**: the **Viewcone** that defines and dominates the core mechanics of the game like no other thing. Viewcones should inform next to all actions you consider with your **crewmates**. The interactions and intersections between viewcones from different **guards**, their **rhythm** and **reach**, the set **speed for detection across difficulty levels.** All of this forms your main opponent. But understanding and embracing viewcones makes them also your **major ally on missions**.

Viewcone Basics

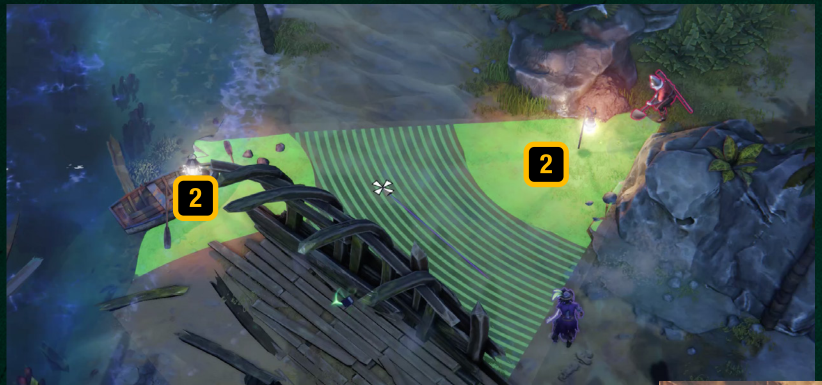
At first sight, the viewcone is merely a **visual representation of what a guard is able to see**.

Their different areas of detection are best explained by looking at them by night when they have a dark and striped part **[1]** that you can safely traverse while moving crouched.

Be aware of light sources **[2]** as these will reveal your **crewmates** when hiding in darkness. Especially moving light sources, carried by guards, put you at risk of getting detected fast.



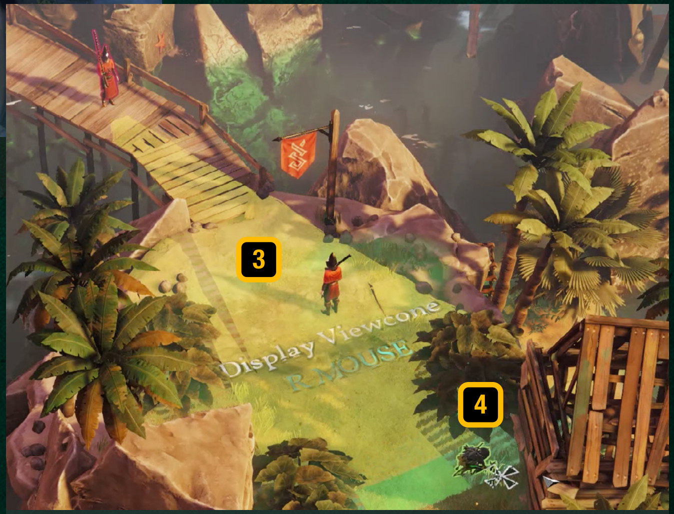
“Hey, wanna see what I see!”



Safe at night… almost!

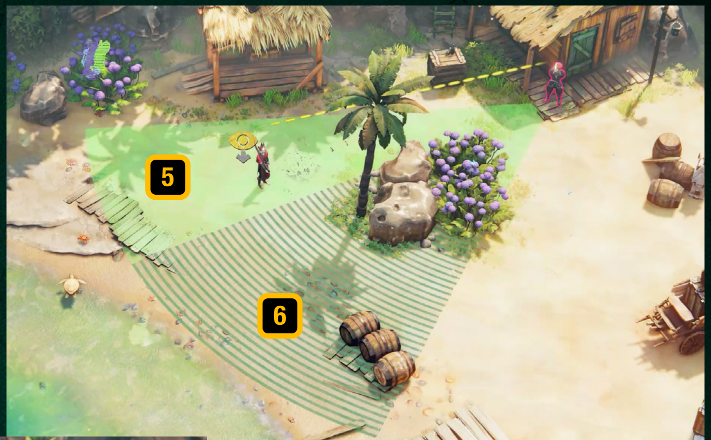
Let’s turn on the light altogether and see how night and daytime determine how far a **guard** can see and eventually spot you, if not moving carefully though environments. Compare **[1]** and **[2]** for night and **[3]** for bright daylight and see what difference this makes. **During daytime there’s next to no striped areas. Just a solid viewcone**.

If **guards** see a **crewmate** their viewcone will quickly grow yellow. When the color reaches the **crewmate**, they are detected and the **guard** will attack or even call for reinforcements by setting alarm. How fast the yellow part will grow also depends on the difficulty setting you’ve chosen. The **viewcone grows yellow from its source**, the **guard**, which is exactly what’s happening in **[3]**.

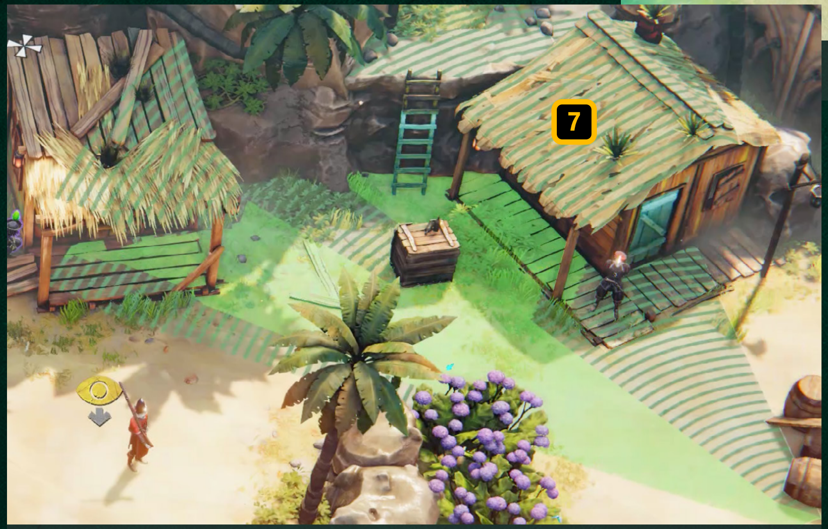


Growing yellow

Guards having better vision by day makes it impossible to hide in a viewcone while crouched, like in spot **[3]** or **[5]**. However, some **objects or spots like bushes or fences** are high enough to **“break” the viewcone,** making it become **partially dark and striped**. These spots can be minutely small like in **[4]** but also huge like in **[6]**. Always inspect and use your environment for your advantage. Use such **objects and spots** as cover when crouching behind them. **Always crouching** is a good idea.



View blockers on sight

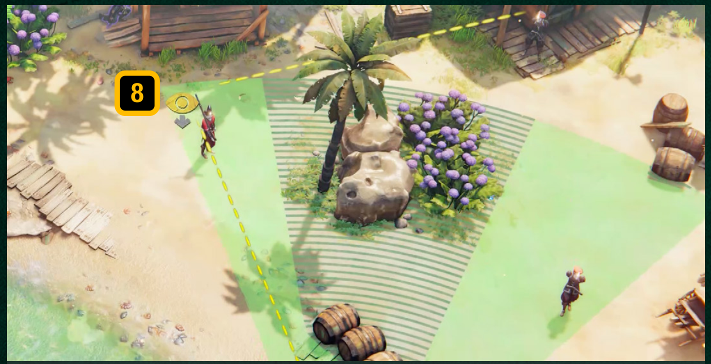


Height levels for advantage

Similar rules can be applied when your **crewmate** is on **higher grounds** than **guards**. This means that you can also **use different heights to your advantage**. Remember that the viewcone is as much your ally as it is your enemy. *Always* read the situation by closely inspecting what viewcones reveal. It can become quite challenging for reading though. The situation in **[7]** illustrates that well. But **viewcones never lie** to you. So pay close attention to details and the positioning of crew members.

Viewcone Markers

Anyone wonders why you can’t have **multiple viewcones under inspection at the same time**. You don’t want that for a great experience. Trust us with that! What is offered as an alternative is in fact much more useful and more importantly less noisy: You can **set the viewcone markers on any guard** you want to get out of the way or on **any spot** like **[8]**. The **dotted lines** appearing will tell you who is watching that **guard** or **spot** from which direction and source exactly.



Viewcone markers

! Viewcone Diving

Don’t be afraid to dive through a guard’s viewcone if necessary. As long as you can get back out fast enough, you will stay undetected. Playing on higher difficulty will affect these options however.

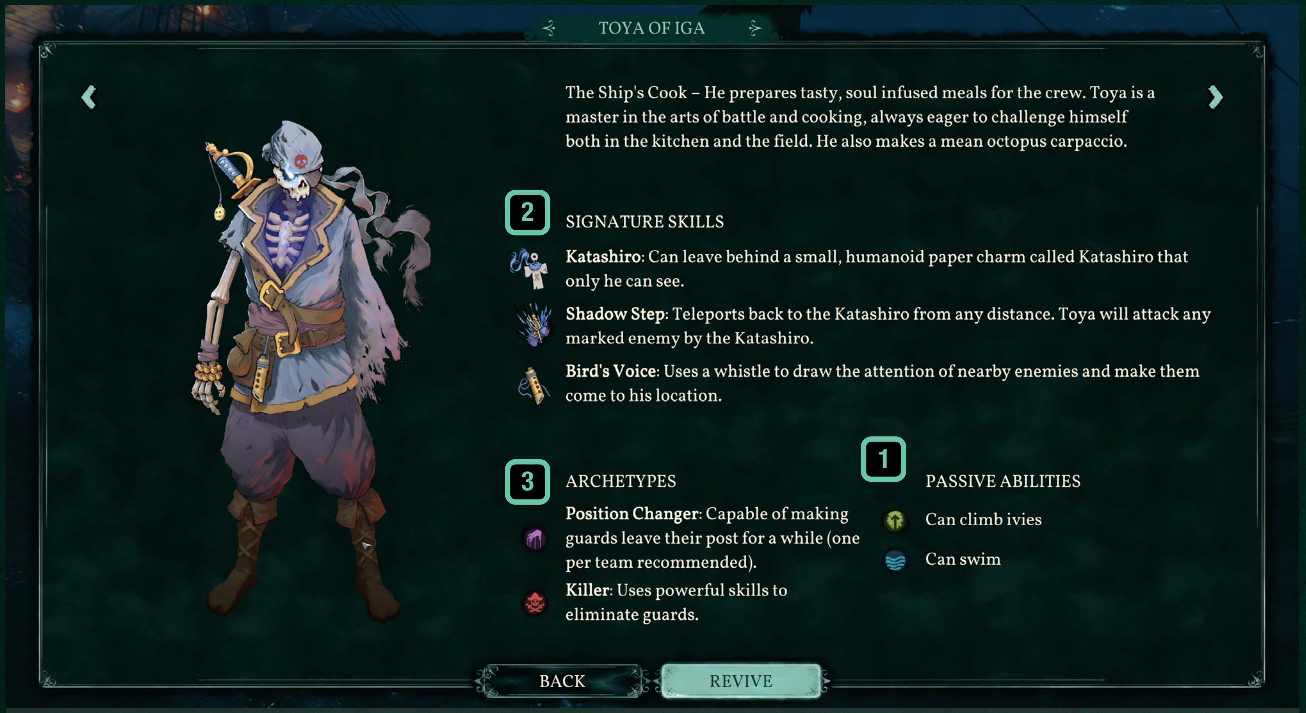
This pretty much covers all there’s to know about viewcones already. They are **easy to understand but often hard to master in combinations**. Getting the timings right for movement and using distractions is key.

The Skillbook

If you **embrace the viewcone as your biggest ally in the game** and embrace the fact that almost every action you consider wisely somehow revolves around the viewcones, you're already up for a great start and well on your way. Which **actions you are able to take into account** at all? Looking at you for answers, Cursed Crew.

Basic Movement

Possibly quite an obvious thing, but movement and being able to move at all while staying undetected is an important part in "Shadow Gambit - The Cursed Crew" and **stealth strategy** in general. Basic movement is fortunately a skill shared by all crewmates: run, walk, crouch - unless being frozen in time by a Prognosticar. Depending on the state their bones are in, some members of the crew are more "skillful" than others: Some can swim, others not. Some can climb ivies, others not. Some drag bodies out of sight while being crouched, others will stand while doing this important task and are prone to be spotted more easily. The game counts such abilities as "passive", displayed for example in the character description sheets you find with those crewmates that have yet to be revived on the Red Marley's deck - see [1] here for Toya of Iga's. As soon as a crew member is revived, use the **tooltips** [4] in the game for a heads up.



TOYA OF IGA

The Ship's Cook – He prepares tasty, soul infused meals for the crew. Toya is a master in the arts of battle and cooking, always eager to challenge himself both in the kitchen and the field. He also makes a mean octopus carpaccio.

2 SIGNATURE SKILLS

Katashiro: Can leave behind a small, humanoid paper charm called Katashiro that only he can see.

Shadow Step: Teleports back to the Katashiro from any distance. Toya will attack any marked enemy by the Katashiro.

Bird's Voice: Uses a whistle to draw the attention of nearby enemies and make them come to his location.

3 ARCHETYPES

Position Changer: Capable of making guards leave their post for a while (one per team recommended).

Killer: Uses powerful skills to eliminate guards.

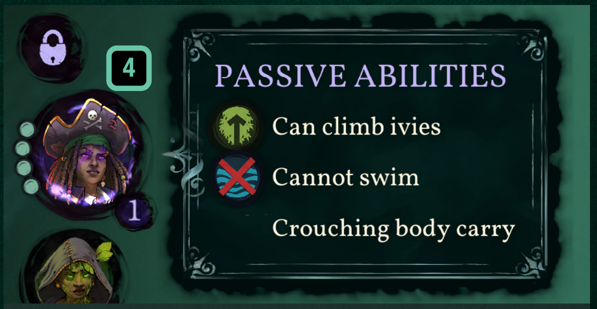
1 PASSIVE ABILITIES

Can climb ivies

Can swim

Toya's invitation card for Revive

We will look closely at each crewmate and their movement skills among all the other skills in this guide. Some of them include teleportation like Toya's "Shadow Step" skill or Afia's short distance "Blink". Gaëlle and Quentin are even able to support movement of crewmates that lack e.g. climbing abilities and are restricted to ladder use, no ivies. Major "Signature Skills" [2] are related to movement: move yourself, move crewmates and most importantly: move guards with help of distractions...



PASSIVE ABILITIES

Can climb ivies

Cannot swim

Crouching body carry

Afia's Passive Abilities tooltip

Distraction Skills Are Key

There are many shiny skills that put the fun in the game. Special skills that grow above the standard melee attack for eliminating guards of the Inquisition in spectacular ways - be it either by lethal kills or the alternative knockout. Always your choice. Skills that define the character in a way that you easily remember them by exactly that skill.

But eventually these skills are not the real star of the show. The distraction skills are. And this is due to their critical potential for breaking up all those difficult setups of guards with their interlocked viewcones, opening windows of opportunity for moving your crewmates and executing fatal strikes. It's the most valuable group of skills at your service. And it often makes a lot of sense to **pick a** crewmate **for a mission just based on their** distraction skill **alone**.

As a first step, let's look at what we have for distractions in the overall skillbook across all crewmates:

Time Freeze

Ashen Judgement

Coin

Sir Reginald

The skills above all share the property that they **open a window of opportunity for any action**. They either temporarily blind guards completely by "freezing" their viewcones, like in the case of Afia's "Time Freeze" and Teresa's "Ashen Judgement". Or they redirect the guards' viewcones to a certain spot, like in the case of Pinkus' "Coin" and John's "Sir Reginald".

Wander Dust

Bird's Voice

The Golden Head

Firecracker

Among distraction skills there's a sub-group of abilities that not only distract but make guards leave their post for a while - at least Acolytes as the most common guard type of the Inquisition. Suleidy's "Wander Dust" makes those guards walk away in a straight line from your own position. Later on this skill can even be upgraded to a reverse version that pulls guards towards Suleidy's own position. A very powerful upgrade with collected Vigor well spent. Toya's "Bird's Voice" lures guards to your position, while Quentin's "The Golden Head" and Gaëlle's "Firecracker" will move them towards the placed or thrown object.

The distraction skills that move guards are outstandingly powerful and valuable. They **define a** character archetype [3] called "Position Changer". It's the only archetype that we explicitly mark as "one per team recommended". So you better take at least one such "skill" on your mission - with its crewmate, of course.

With all the power of distraction at hand, these skills will have **different effects on the different types of** Inquisition guards. So you have to know what you're up against. We will take a close look at the servants of the Inquisition, their **properties and abilities**, after we took a "deep dive" into all the crewmates' skills for the whole arsenal of power against them.

Reviving the Cursed Crew

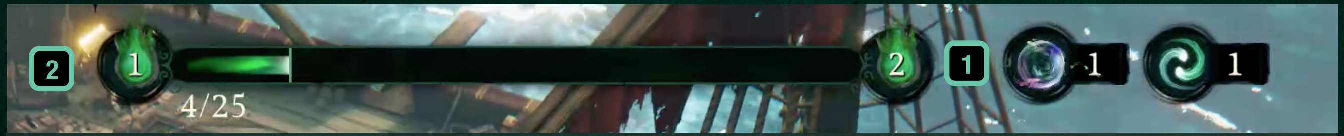
Before we go through the list of all the playable characters and their arsenal of skills and abilities, it's probably a good idea to take a moment and reflect on the fact that you **won't have them all available when you start playing the game**. Instead, **"Shadow Gambit - The Cursed Crew"** puts you in a rather difficult situation: **deciding which character to unlock one after the other**. You are "burdened" with the agony of choice almost until the credits roll. You have to collect 'em all...

You start with **Afia** who is not a member of the **original Cursed Crew**, but frees the **Marley** and gets a deal as the ship's navigator. Early on you can choose from **two members of the original crew** that are still on the **Marley** and ready for being revived: **Suleidy** and **Toya of Iga**. Both great and powerful characters to get you into the game.
You can **only revive crewmates by earning and collecting Black Pearls and Soul Energy on missions** that offer these as **rewards**. You need **1 Black Pearl** and **1 Soul Energy** for reviving each **character**. Always. The second act of the game revolves mainly around the **Captain's Riddle** and the "Five of Marley's Crew" that you bring back to the **crew** for unlocking the third and final act. For that you have to get enough **Black Pearls** and **Soul Energy** from **mission rewards**.

You get your **first two Black Pearls** in the game right when you enter the **Marley** for the first time after freeing her from the **Inquisition** on **Morrow's Reach**, which is your first mission. Ask around and follow the questline for that. The **Marley** still has some **Soul Energy** in stock, so you're ready to revive either **Suleidy** or **Toya**.
Having done this you will go for the **rest of the crew** in **"A Ship Needs a Crew"** - a daytime mission again on **Morrow's Reach**. After that **the whole Cursed Crew** is back on **Marley's deck** ready to be revived.

Holding a Black Pearl

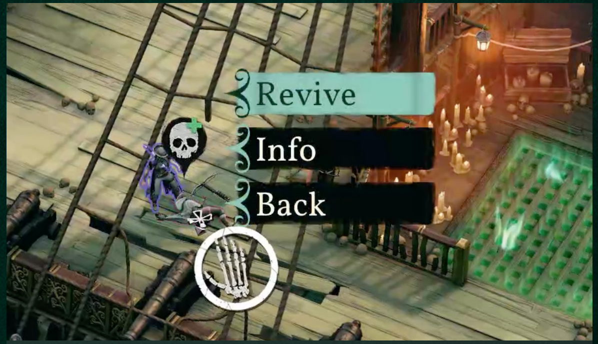
The **amount of Black Pearls and Soul Energy available** is always displayed at the top of the screen **[1]** when you are **on the Marley**. Right next to the **"Vigor bar"** **[2]** - we come to that in a moment.



Black Pearl and Soul Energy restocked for reviving another crewmate

Your **inventory of Black Pearls and Soul Energy** will be **hopefully empty** most of the time for the right reasons. There is **no sense in not reviving crewmates right after you gathered one of each**. Don't let it pile up.

So, that's the way: You **collect the resources and revive characters** until you have the whole lot ready for missions. The game starts with only **Afia** and then **one other crewmate** to take on mission. With only one huge exception throughout the game (no spoilers yet), you will be **restricted to three crew members per mission**. So again it's the agony of choice, but there's a thing that makes the decision whom to take a bit easier ...

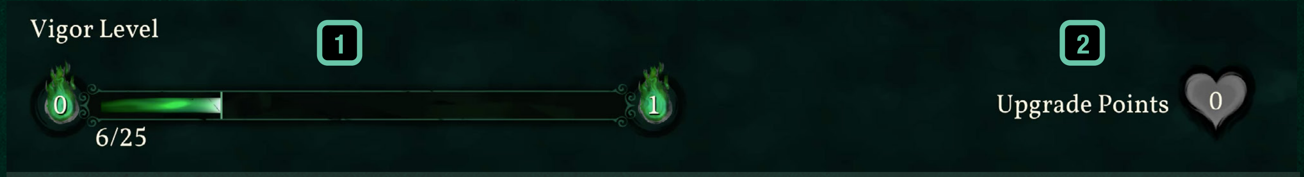


Ready to revive Teresa here

Evolving the Crew Members

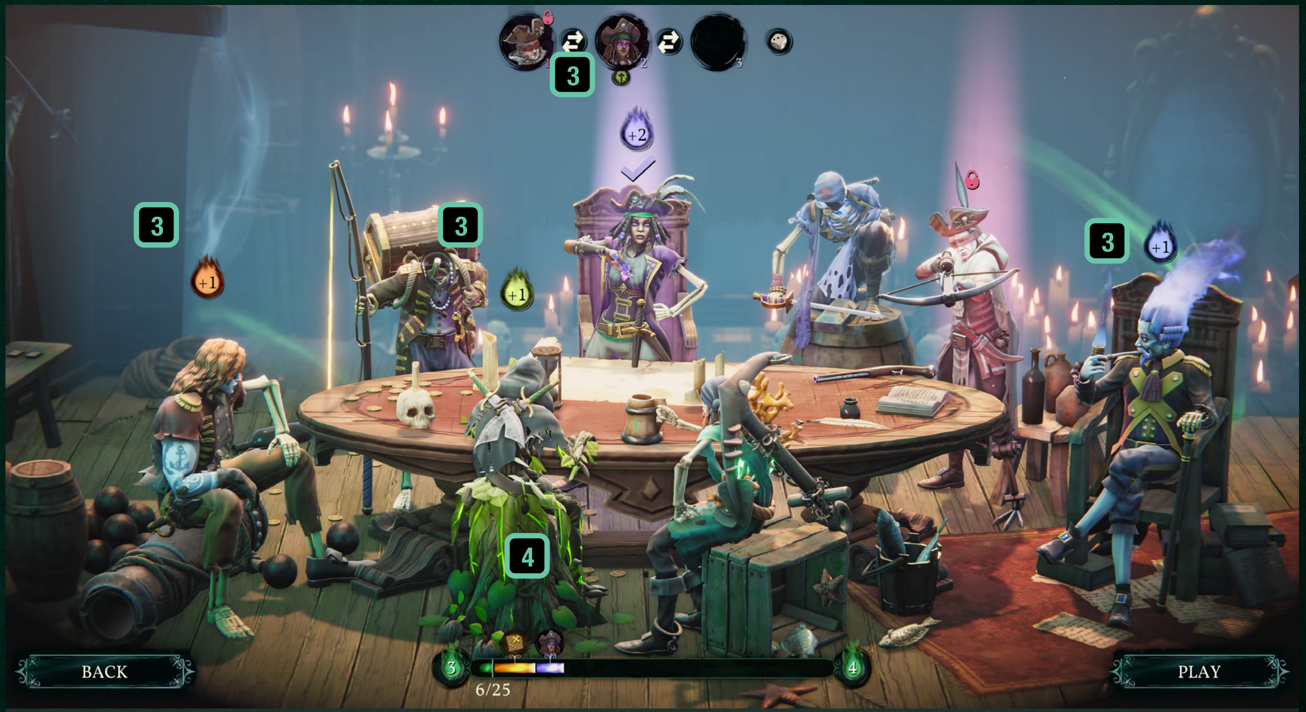
"Shadow Gambit - The Cursed Crew" offers a simple but effective progression or experience system for character evolvement via **skill upgrades**. It's all about **collecting Vigor**.

For every mission you play, you get **Vigor Boost**. You see how much you earn right in the mission select screen accessible from the **map table on the Marley's deck**. Don't expect huge variation here - or any: it is always a solid **Vigor Boost of 3** for each and every mission. No matter how many crewmates are on a mission. No matter how long the mission or how difficult. It's that easy to calculate. In **[1]** from the **Upgrade Store** screen right next to the **map table** - you see the **Vigor Level** in number and the **Vigor Bar** right after the first two missions that earned you **three Vigor each**.

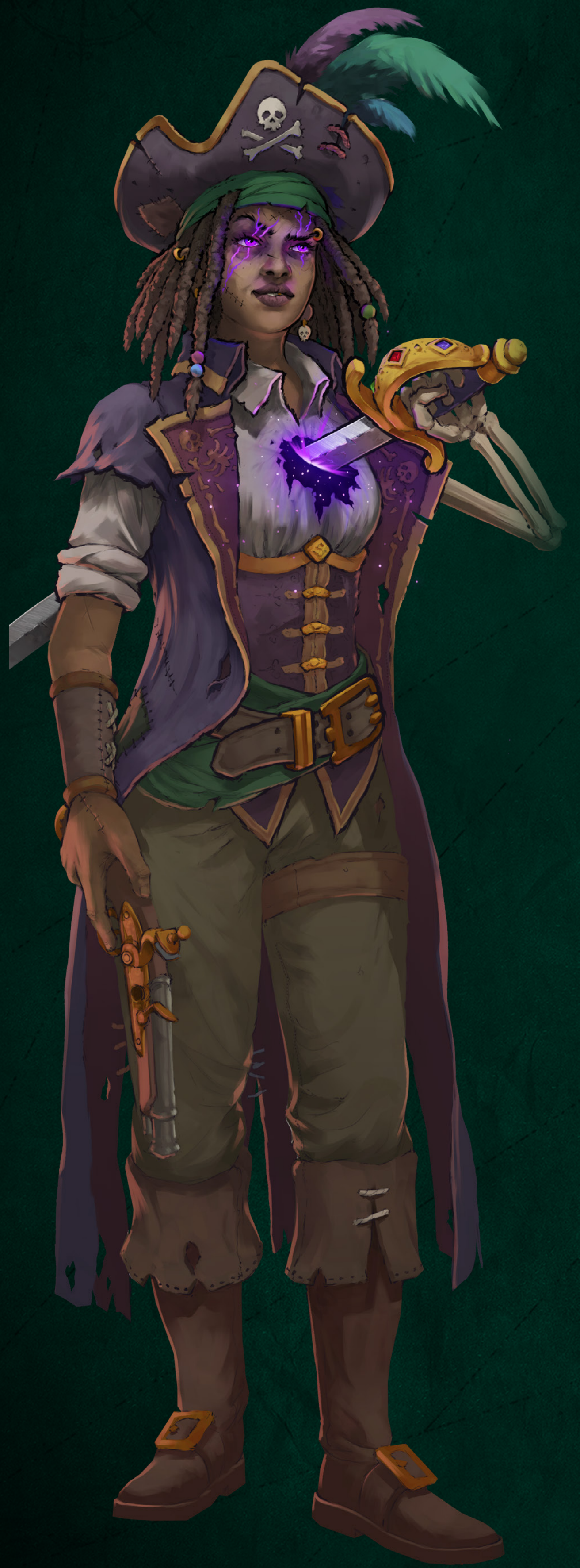


Your Vigor Level in the Upgrade Store

Each 25 Vigor will earn you an **Upgrade Point** **[2]** that you can spend in the **Upgrade Store**. Another difficult decision waits: Which **signature skill** of which **crewmate** you want to upgrade first? Don't worry too much though as they are all great and you can check upgrading options for each character in this guide next. Eventually you will earn enough **Vigor** to unlock them all, even if that will take you some time and stretch right into endgame content. There's **one way** for earning **more than 3 Vigor per mission** however and progress faster for **upgrading the next skill** and eventually all: Each **crewmate** that had to stay **on the Marley** for a mission will receive **one additional Vigor Boost that stacks** **[3]**. Once you select that **crewmate** for mission, you will **earn these Vigor points** as a bonus after completing the mission. The **Boost in Vigor** is displayed at the **Vigor Bar** in **[4]**. **Leaving your "comfort zone"** earns you **Vigor** then. Also makes it easier to pick the "loadout" and experience the whole spectrum of the game's characters.



The whole crew gathered pre-mission



The character that actually isn't a member of the **Cursed Crew** but is the character you start the game with will remain the main character. It's...

Afia Manicato

The Navigator – She handles maps and navigation on **board the Marley**. Chooses entry points and makes moment to moment decisions on mission. Serves as unwavering moral compass for the **Marley and the crew**.

Afia is ambitious, forward pushing and energetic and has a sword in her chest that keeps her from dissolving into space, time and swimming. She's out to find big treasure just like any good pirate. **Captain Mordechai's** treasure especially, helping her to make a name for herself. That's the plan.

Originally she joins the **Marley** out of pure interest for the big treasure the **Marley** is hunting, but then learns that it's far more valuable to have a **group of friends** you can rely on. We get to know her right from the beginning with trickster **Virgilio** offering her the opportunity join the **Red Marley's crew**. She accepts and **Virgilio** teleports her to **Morrow's Reach** where the **Marley** is held captive by **Inquisitor Ignacia**. She frees the **Marley**, which earns her a place in the **crew**.

Archetypes

Infiltrator: Operates and navigates behind enemy lines.

Killer: Uses powerful skills to eliminate **guards**.

Signature Skills

Blink

Jump to a new location or jump at an enemy to attack.
Comes with a non-lethal knockout.

Range 8.0
Noise Radius 5.5
Attack Duration 5
Cooldown 5.0s

Time Freeze

Select a guard to freeze them in time. They will stop their current behavior and won't react to any new impulses. However, you can still attack them.

Range 12.0
Effect Duration 5.5s
Cooldown 10.0s

Grand Blink (Upgrade)

A more powerful version of the **Blink ability**. You can jump at any position or attack any enemy in range without restrictions. Comes with a non-lethal knockout.

Range 17.0
Noise Radius 5.5
Attack Duration 5
Cooldown 8.0s

Combat

Melee Kill (long)

Kill a **guard** with a **slow melee attack**.
Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Flintlock Pistol

A flintlock pistol with limited ammo.

Noise Radius 12.0
Range 10.0

Passive Abilities

Can climb ivies

Can't swim

Crouching body carry

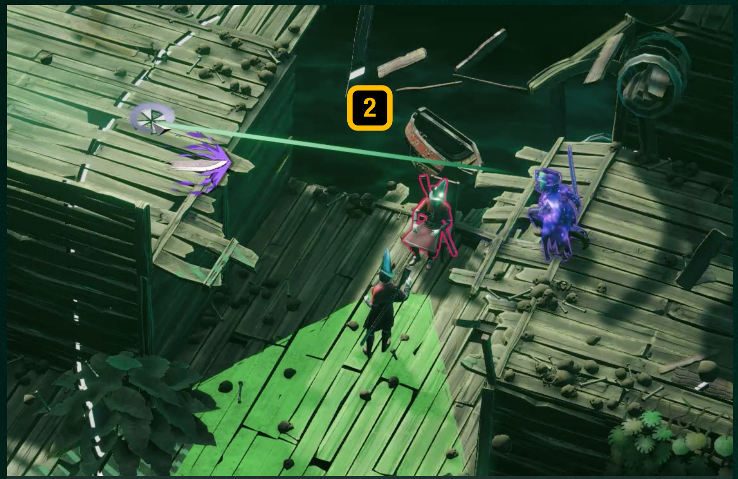
Afia's power is to move around undetected by using her Blink and her Time Freeze ability. She can freeze guards of the Inquisition in time to move past them while she can also quickly jump towards near locations without being seen. A great Infiltrator she is. Let's look at her skills in more detail. Be aware that we only look at skills and skill combinations for single characters for now. We will look into later.

Blink

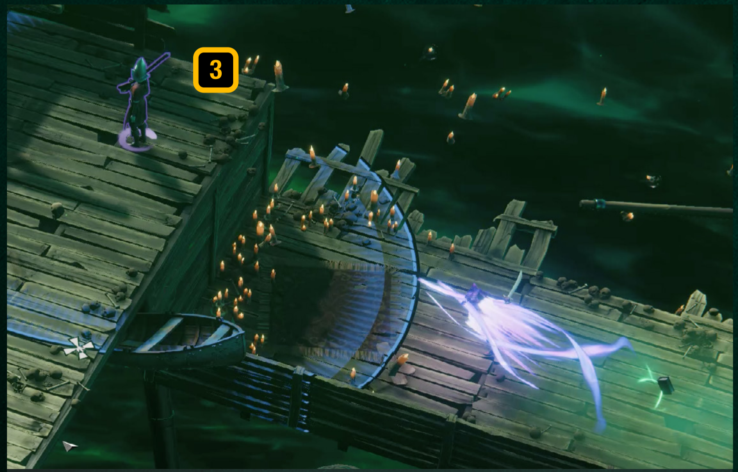
Blink allows Afia to quickly jump from one place to another within a limited range. This can be either used as a traversal tool or to quickly attack any guard in range.

Afia can travel short distances in an instance and unseen. A perfect situation to use this can be seen in [1]: you can cross the gap that is overlooked by two guards.

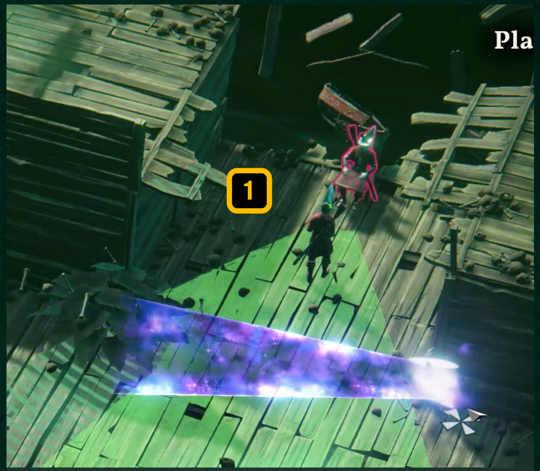
Blink is just the **perfect combination of movement and a kind of distraction in a single ability**. This makes Afia an immensely fast member of the crew, not because she moves fast per se, but how fast she is able to act in situations because of this combination. Any other crewmate might have to distract guards first for moving past a viewcone. Afia however can just dash through it as seen in [1].



Crossing gaps



Strike upwards and conquer height levels

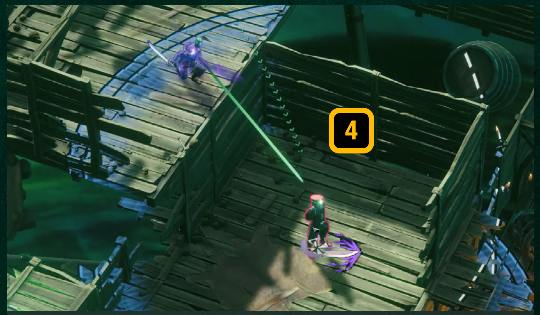


Viewcone traversal defined

As Blink lets you overcome space and time, you won't need ground and floor for traversal on the same height level [2].

You can jump towards locations on the same level or below. However, you can still **move upwards** if you manage to **attack a** guard that is **above you** [3]. This results in Blink actually **combining three abilities:** movement, distraction and melee attack that comes both in a lethal and non-lethal knockout version. It hardly gets more powerful than that.

You are also able to strike "downwards" and hit a guard standing below [4]. This completes the set, but could also be done by jumping down and "manually" taking the guard out. But still...

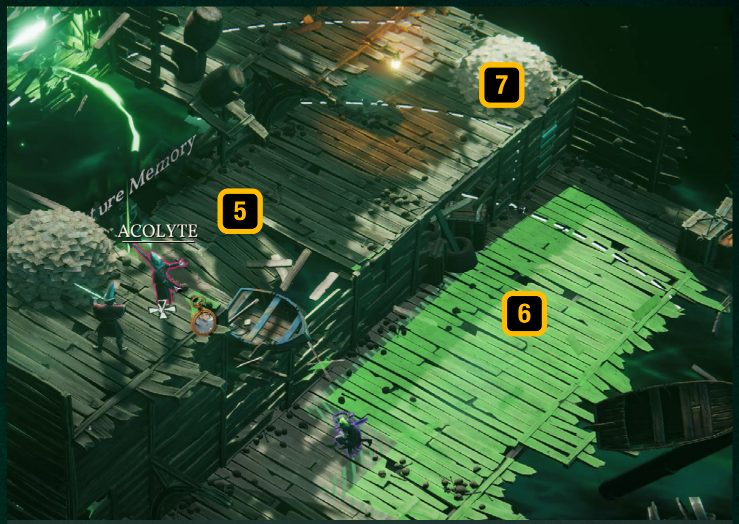


Strike below... duh!

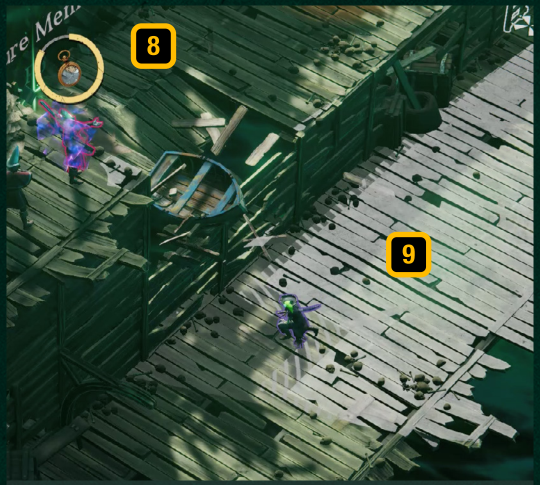
Time Freeze

Afia's second signature skill is Time Freeze that allows her to, you guessed it, freeze any guard in time. While a guard is affected by the effect, they cannot move and they cannot hear or see anything.

In [5] the Acolyte overlooks the area that you need to pass [6]. This time the viewcone covers a much larger area which makes it impossible to benefit from Blink's short distance effect alone. Use Time Freeze on the guard so that you can get to the ladder [7]. You easily make it to the ladder by freezing the Acolyte's viewcone in time, watching the timer [8] of the effect while running to the ladder through the now inactive viewcone marked in grey [9]. You can of course use Blink for the last distance. Always an option.

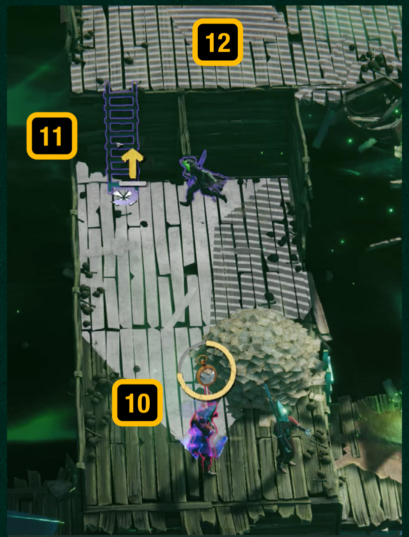


Distracting and making distance with Time Freeze



Effect timer and viewcone turning grey

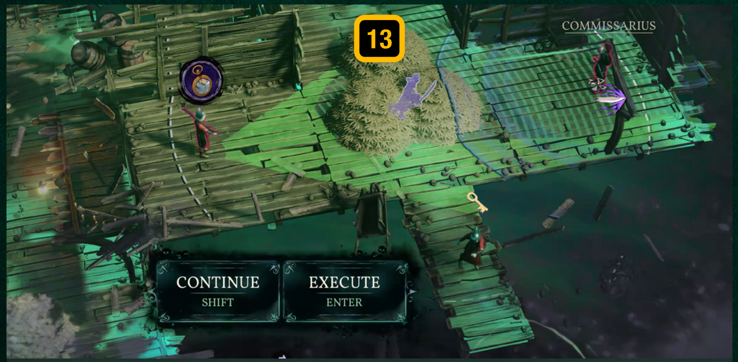
You can always use Shadow Mode in time critical situation. You can use this mode for chaining up two skills of your character or just for one while you play out the other in "real-time". The latter is shown in [13].



Pacifist move

Also keep in mind that you don't always have to bother with killing guards when using such mighty skills.

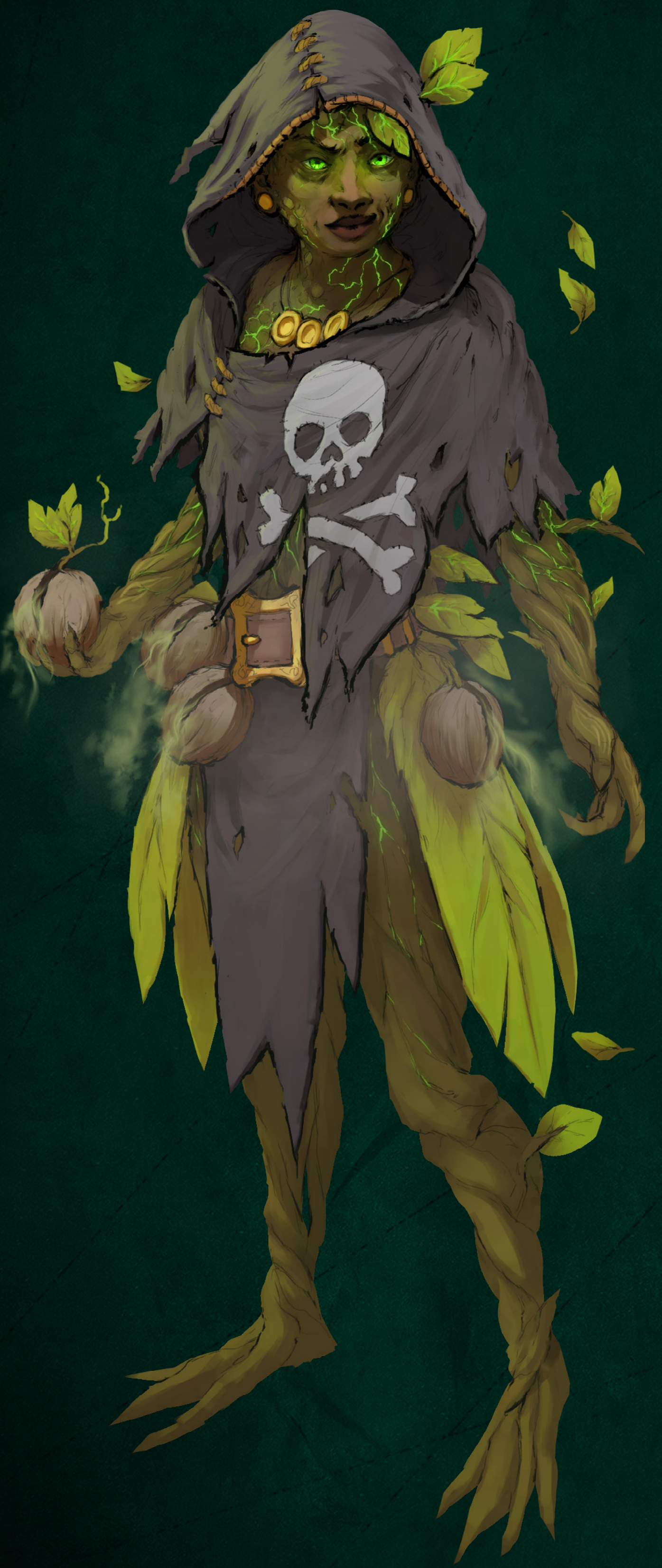
For example, you can easily sneak past the guards [10] and just leave them be by using the Time Freeze ability. Run to the ladder [11] and get to the higher level [12]. Crouch for not being detected after the Time Freeze effect wore off.



Distract and Blink to kill

Afia and the Prognosticar

We will go into the special powers of Inquisition guards later on, but for now remember that Afia's Blink is especially useful against the Prognosticar that often blocks your way with a viewcone that cannot be redirected by any distraction at all. Afia is perfectly able to traverse such an otherwise difficult passage like no other character.



Next in line is **Suleidy**, probably the first **member** of the original **Cursed Crew** you will "revive". Together with **Toya of Iga**, she is among the two remaining **crewmates** that are still on the **Marley**, with the others all captured and tortured on **Morrow's Reach** before you rescue them.

Suleidy

The Ship Doctor - She takes care of the **Marley's skeleton crew** and makes cures for nasty soul sicknesses. Puts the health of the **crew** above anything else, but sometimes comes off as cold though, and uncaring as she can get easily lost in her fascinations with soul sicknesses.

She's also deadly with a blade. The soul infused plants **Suleidy** grows in her sick bay help her research the mysteries of the Curse.

Suleidy is a plant - or half a plant - and concerns herself with the sciences of **Soul Energy**. Looks and acts young but has countless years of knowledge and experience under her belt. Years ago, she studied soul sciences under a giant sentient plant called the **Dread Vine**. After that she started studying in **Soulfire Academy**, a university dedicated to the **Curse of Lost Souls**. Unfortunately, she did not fit in with the academics there and quickly got herself expelled. **Suleidy** promptly decided on stealing several documents that were denied to her and fled from **Soulfire Academy**.
After that she met the **Captain** who offered her a place to study **on the Marley** in exchange for her services as a Ship Doctor.

Archetypes

Position Changer: Capable of making **guards** leave their post for a while (one per team recommended).

Body Hider: Knows how to cover their tracks and leaves no body behind.

Signature Skills

Cover Seeds

A strange and fastgrowing plant, that one... **Suleidy** can throw vials to **grow bushes around her**. Perfect for hiding yourself and bodies in open space! Cannot be thrown too close to **guards**.

Range 10.0
Cooldown 5.0s

Wander Dust

Dazes the hardiest **Inquisition guard** with its odor and makes them walk away from **Suleidy's position** in a straight line. **Higher ranked guards** will resist though and only turn around for a moment.

Range 12.0
Cooldown 15.0s
Duration 5.0s

Wander Dust, Reverse! (Upgrade)

Makes **guards move towards Suleidy's current position**. A powerful **lure skill**, but again **higher ranked guards** will resist and only turn around for a moment.

Range 12.0
Cooldown 15.0s
Duration 5.0s

Combat

Melee Kill (short)

Kill a **guard** with a **quick melee attack**. Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 2.5s

Flintlock Pistol

A flintlock pistol with limited ammo.

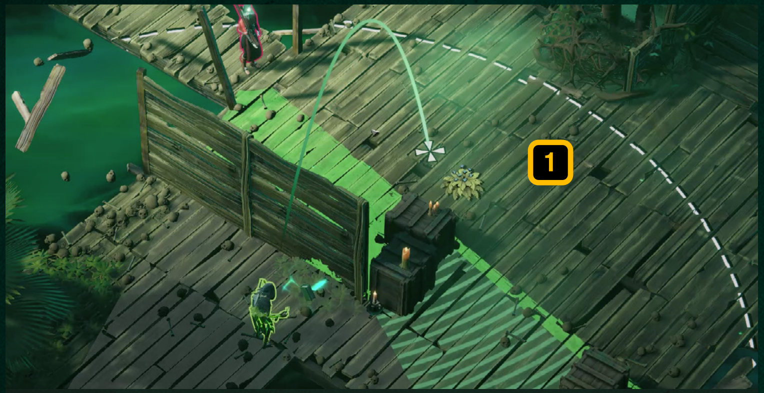
Noise Radius 12.0
Range 10.0

Passive Abilities

- Can climb ivies
- Can swim
- Standing body carry

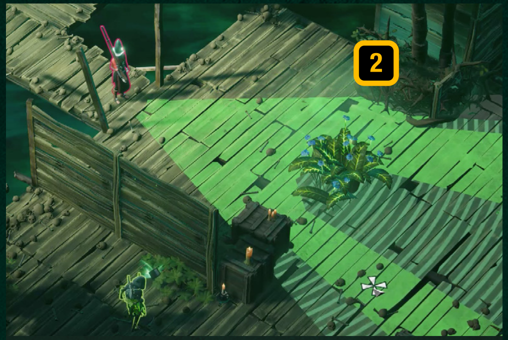
Suleidy is a quick killer and a great support. With her **Cover Seeds** ability she can create bushes to hide her **crewmates** or clean up bodies. Her **Wander Dust** allows **Suleidy** to **move guards away from their positions** to send them into ambushes. In case you collected enough **vigor** for an **upgrade point** and want to spend it on **"Wander Dust"**, you get the reverse skill as well, meaning that **Suleidy** can **pull guards towards her position**. Let's take a closer look...

Cover Seeds



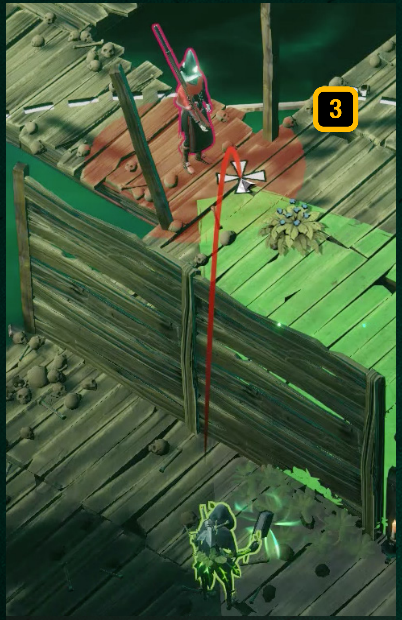
Aim, shoot...

Using **Cover Seeds** means **throwing a vial to grow a bush [1]**.

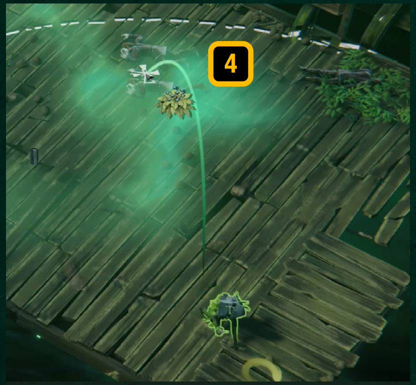


... and grow.

This way you **create cover** for yourself and your **crewmates [2]**. You can only grow one bush at a time though.
And it cannot be placed too close to **guards [3]**.

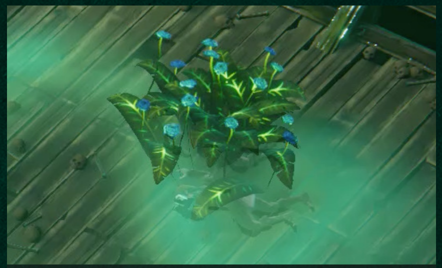


Too close!

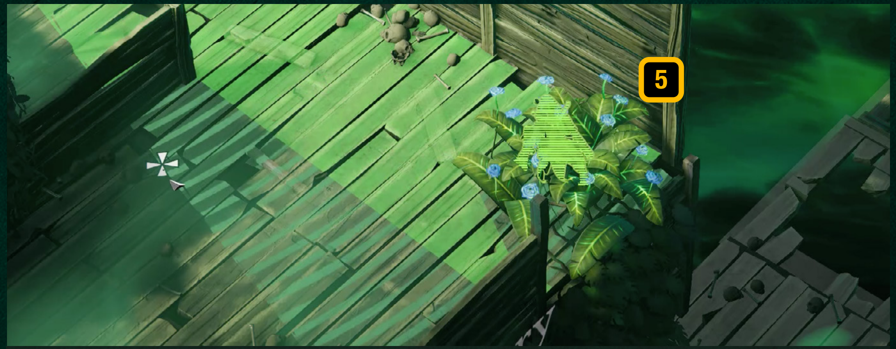


Throw at bodies

You also benefit from the other properties of bushes: Create bushes on top of bodies to make them disappear **[4]**. Works only for dead or tied up bodies.



Let them sink in.



Safe at night… almost!

Also use **Cover Seeds** to **create entries into locations** that are observed by **guards**. Create a bush at the **top of the ivy [5]** so that **Suleidy** is hidden when she climbs up.

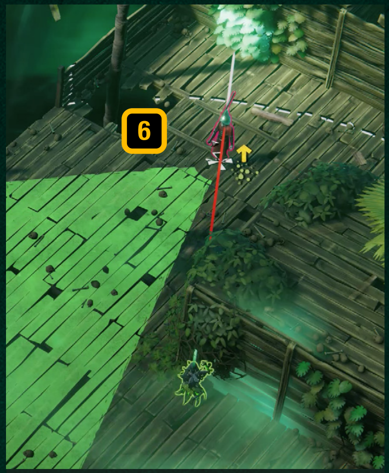
Wander Dust

Wander Dust manipulates **guards** into walking away in a straight line. You use this **skill** either as a distraction or as a tool to **reposition guards** in your favor, making **Suleidy** a powerful **"Position Changer" archetype**.

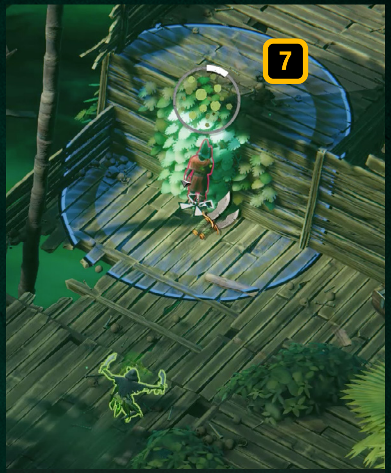
Use **Wander Dust** to make a **guard** turn around and walk away. You can use **Cover Seeds** to get into a better position, of course. Combine your skills. Always!

But even from a "blocked" position, a red line **[6]** tells you roughly where the guard will walk. Watch the viewcone and be quick to turn around the corner in this case.

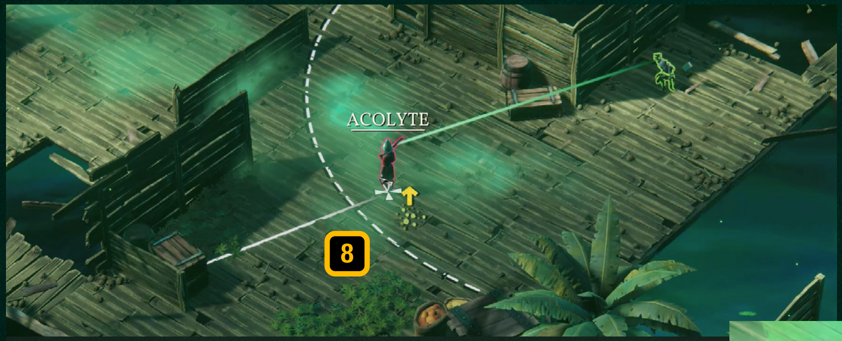
Watch the timer **[7]** and strike fast to take out the guard who turned his back on you.



Like aiming... with a guard

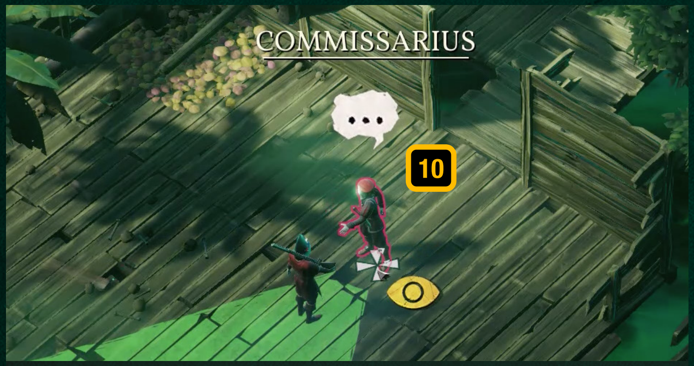


Watch the timer!

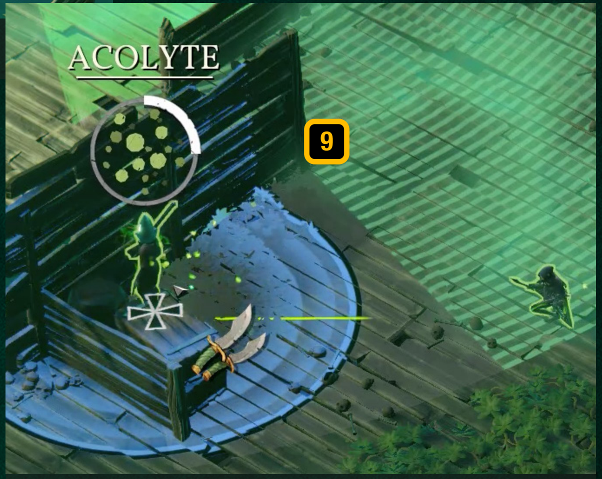


Walk out of sight

A great use of **Wander Dust** is to make **guards** move out of sight **[8]** so that **Suleidy** can attack them without being detected by other guards **[9]**.



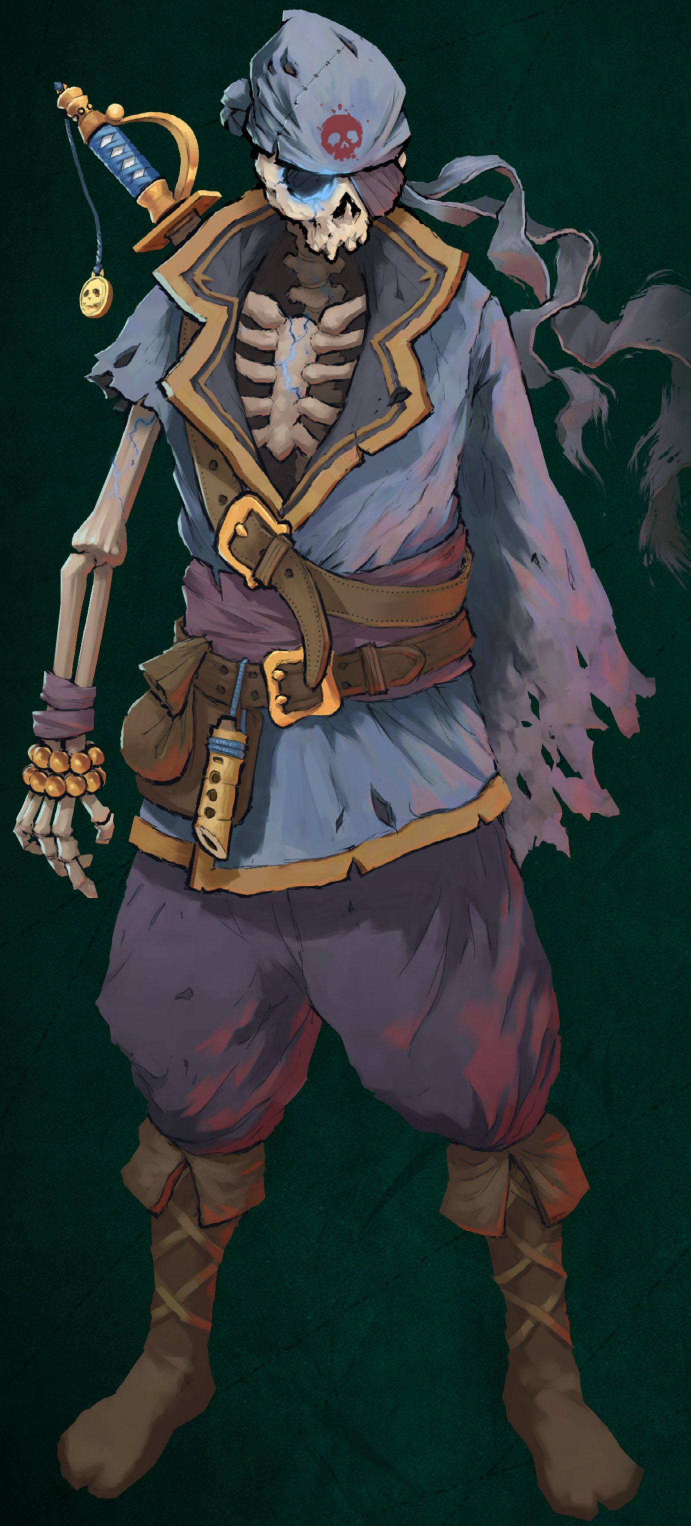
Commissarius not to be impressed



Strike and be undetected

Be aware that not all **guards** can be manipulated with **Wander Dust**. The **Commissarius [10]** will only get lightly irritated, while the **Acolyte [9]** will be the perfect victim.

Get familiar with what you can do with a single character's skillset. However, endless possibilities will open up once you use this exact knowledge for combining skills across the crew!



Together with Suleidy and as already mentioned, **Toya** is among the two remaining **crewmates** that are still on the **deck of the Marley**. You can “revive” him first in line as an alternative to **Suleidy**. After playing the early mission **“A Ship Needs a Crew”** on **Morrow’s Reach**, you can choose from the whole Cursed Crew though. But **Toya** is always a great choice.

Toya of Iga

The Ship’s Cook - He prepares tasty, soul infused meals for the **crew** and is a master in the arts of battle and cooking, always eager to challenge himself both in the kitchen and the field. He also makes a mean octopus carpaccio, but never kills enemies with poisoned food. And never loses a game of cards.

Toya is a one handed blade master and was sent to the Caribbean by the Shogun to investigate the rumors of undeads and magic haunting **The Timeless Shores**. Lost his left arm in a duel with **Sam Bellamy**, who then turned him undead to save his life.

After the war, **Toya** drifted the **Caribbean**, cooking to keep his mind off things. **Captain Mordechai** picked him up in a dingy pirate port, where he served in a tavern kitchen. After tasting his food, he instantly offers **Toya** a spot in the **Marley’s crew**.

Archetypes

Position Changer: Capable of making guards leave their post for a while (one per team recommended).

Killer: Uses powerful skills to eliminate **guards**.

Signature Skills

Katashiro

Can leave behind a small, humanoid paper charm called **Katashiro** that only he can see. Can be placed anywhere, even pinned on **moving guards**. Select a **location to place** the **Katashiro**, then use **Shadow Step** to **teleport** to that location.

Range 3.0
Cooldown 1.0s

Shadow Step

Teleports to the **Katashiro’s location** from any distance. **Toya** will attack any marked enemy by the **Katashiro**. Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Bird’s Voice

Uses a whistle to **draw the attention of nearby enemies** and make them **come to the noise’s location**.

Noise Radius 10.0
Cooldown 10.0s

Shadow Swap (Upgrade)

Improves **Toya’s Katashiro**. When using **Shadow Step**, the **Katashiro** won’t disappear anymore. Instead, it **moves to Toya’s previous position**.

Combat

Melee Kill (short)

Kill a **guard** with a **quick melee attack**. Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 2.5s

Flintlock Pistol

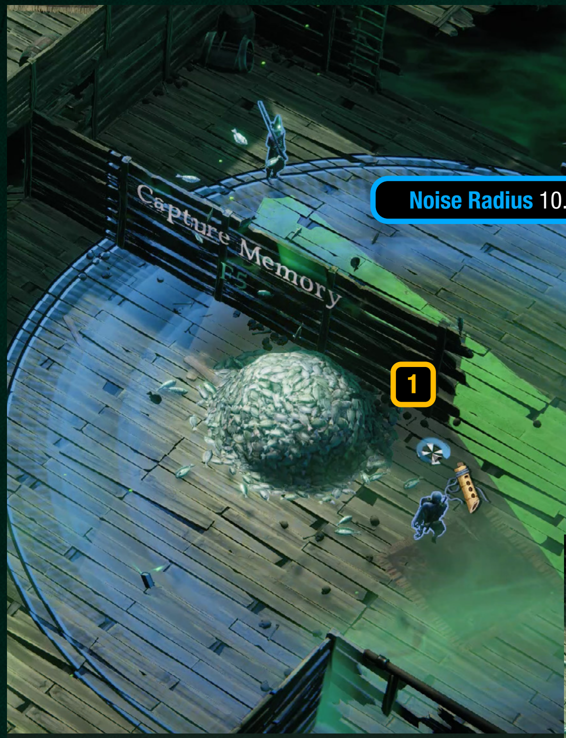
A flintlock pistol with limited ammo.

Noise Radius 12.0
Range 10.0

Passive Abilities

- Can climb ivies
- Can swim
- Standing body carry

Toya is a versatile and agile assassin, **"Killer" archetype**, who can quickly get rid of **guards** with his **fast melee attack**. His skillbook contains **Bird's Voice** with which he can **lure enemies away from their positions** and the powerful **Shadow Step ability** that allows **Toya** to **teleport to his Katashiro's location** instantly from **any position**.



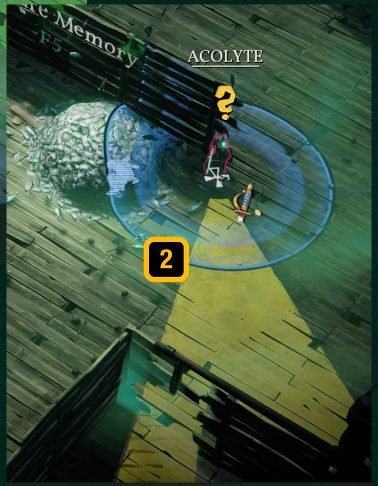
Huge noise radius to Toya's advantage

Bird's Voice

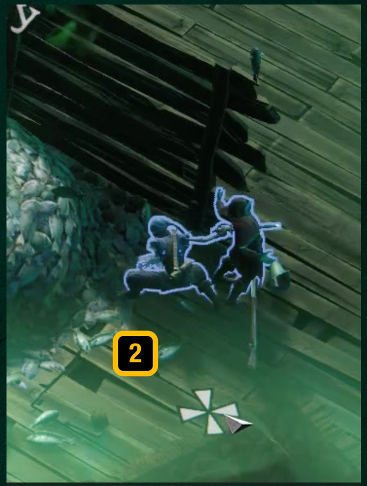
The **Bird's Voice skill** allows **Toya** to **lure guards to his current location**. **"Current location"** implying that this **location** better not be the place where the lured **guard** will actually find **Toya**. You better hide **someplace else** after using it. **Bird's Voice** is the **perfect single force ambush skill**...

Bird's Voice has a **huge noise radius** which in this case is to your advantage as any **guard** will be attracted within that radius.

In our example here, we let **Toya** whistle in **spot [1]** and make him immediately hide in that **pile of fish** that his old skull won't find smelly. The easily lured **Acolyte** will investigate the source of noise while **Toya** attacks him in the right moment **[2]**.

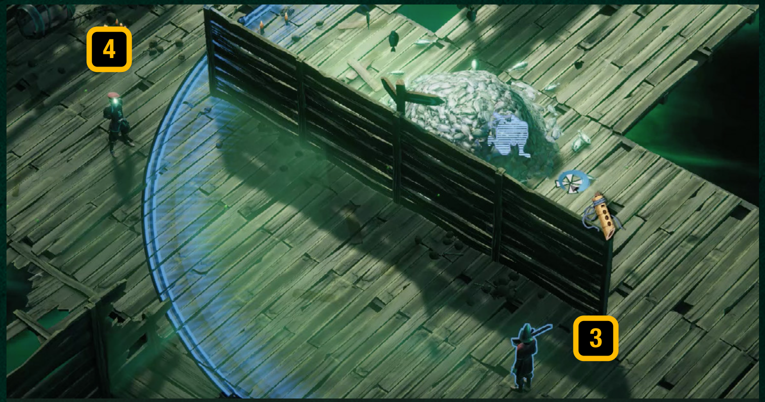


Wait for it...

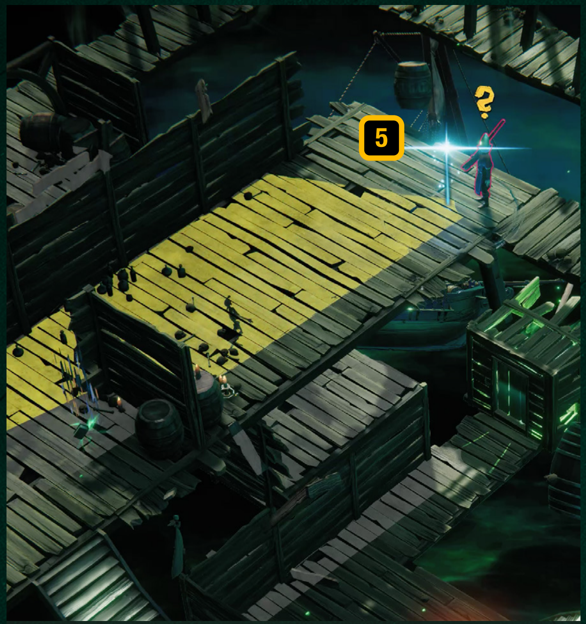


... and strike

Not all **guards** will be affected in the same way by **distractions**, as you already know. The **Commissarius** for example will turn to the noise but he won't leave his position. With this, **Bird's Voice** becomes a **distraction** that compares to a **distraction** like **Pinkus von Presswald's Coin** - which is also fine. Even the cooldown values are similar here.
You can lure the **Acolyte [3] behind the wall** so that you can attack her without being detected. Place the **spot of the Bird's Voice** whistle either in a way that the **Commissarius [4]** won't be within the noise radius like here. Or you just don't care as the **Commissarius** won't come after the noise anyway. Just looking.



The Commissarius won't care as much about noise



Toya dissolving into thin air ...

Shadow Step and the Katashiro

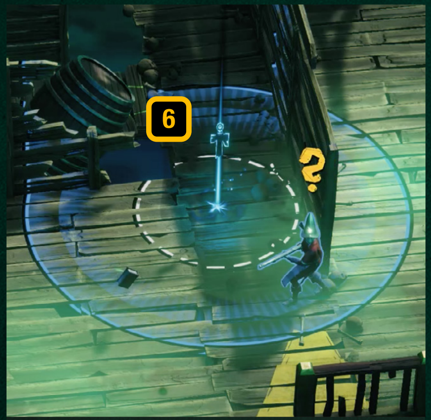
Toya's Shadow Step skill is available whenever his **Katashiro** is placed. So it's basically one skill.

In **[5]**, the **Katashiro** is placed **in front of the guard**. Trigger **Shadow Step** and **Toya** will **teleport** to the **Katashiro** and **immediately attack the guard**.

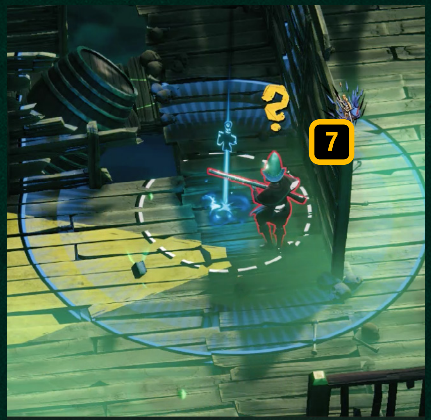
... coming down hard ...

... very hard

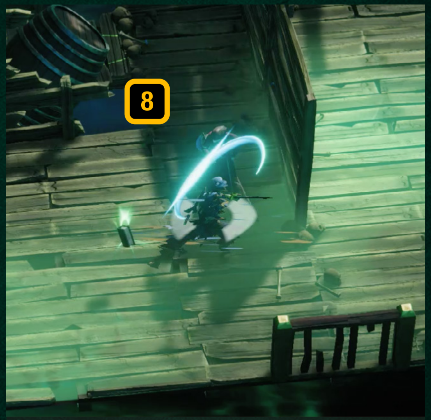
The **Katashiro**, **Shadow Step** and **Bird's Voice** combine beautifully in the next example situation:
You place the **Katashiro** and use **Bird's Voice to lure the guard into the range of your Katashiro [6]**. As soon as the **guard** is marked red **[7]**, trigger **Shadow Step** to strike **[8]**.



Lured to the Katashiro

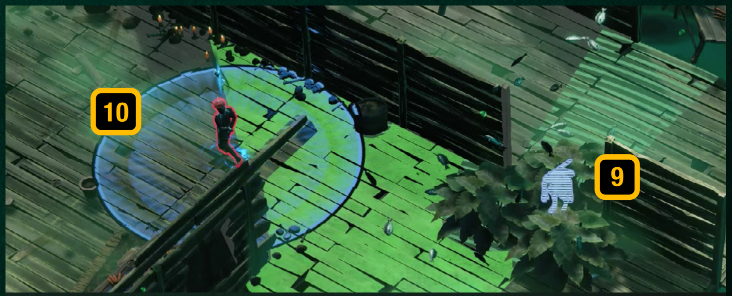


In range for attack ...

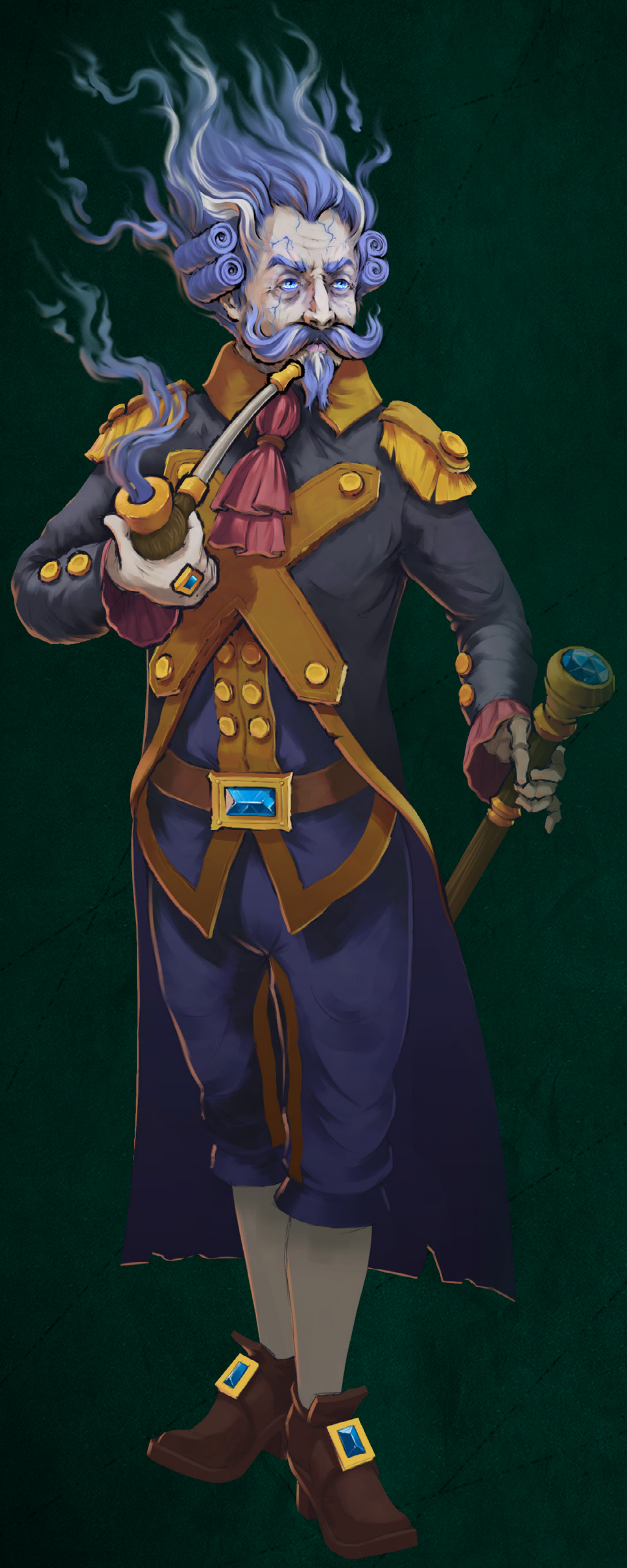


... coming down hard

Toya can also attach the **Katashiro** directly to **guards**, although they have to be dangerously close to you. Do this from a **hiding spot** like **[9]** and you're fine. This is especially useful when attaching the **Katashiro** to any **patrolling guard** like the **Commissarius**. When they move out of sight **[10]**, you can use **Shadow Step to attack** them. Which means **teleportation** for **Toya** and the **strategical use of patrolling guards to get them in blind spots** of all the other **guards** who might watch.



Katashiro-marked Commissarius walks into blind spot



Pinkus is a great character for inventive, unusual playstyles and a guarantee for memorable situations on your journey. His **Peruse Mind skill** transforms his skillset into the guards he takes over. Be prepared for infiltrating the **Inquisition** and spy on them...

Pinkus von Presswald

The Quartermaster - He keeps the **Marley's** books and oversees rations and supplies. Besides that, **Pinkus** usually cherishes a good smoke while he misappropriates the aforementioned books as his personal memoirs.

He never did any physical labor in his entire life and intends to keep it that way. Actually possesses others to avoid doing chores. **Pinkus** is constantly oblivious to his own disregard of other people. Overly confident as he's gotten used to other people fixing mistakes.

Pinkus travelled the world for several years.
One time he decided he'd like to experience being imprisoned by the **Inquisition** for once. He was, but soon realized that he has seen all there is in the prison and escapes. The night he escaped, he walks in a tavern where he meets the **Captain** by chance. They talk to each other or rather **Pinkus** talks to the Captain until he finally just asks **Pinkus** to join his crew, hoping that some other **crewmate** or his ship will listen to his endless stories.

Archetypes

Infiltrator: Operates and navigates behind enemy lines.

Spy: When disguised, they can move undetected along **guards** and through their view-cones.

Signature Skills

Peruse Mind

Pinkus is able to force his soul in the mind of an **Acolyte guard** and **take over their body**. This grants certain **new abilities** like an **additional distraction via conversations**, a **melee kill** and also **taking over another guard** right from the already taken **guard**.

Control Range 24.0
Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Coin

Pinkus tosses a coin at quite a distance and it will make a **noise that distracts guards**. He won't bother to pick the coin up again.

Noise Radius 3.5
Cooldown 9.0s

Peruse Mind (Upgrade)

Allows **Pinkus** to **take control of any type of guard**. **Prognosticars** still need to be agitated first for this to work, though.

Control Range 24.0
Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Combat

Melee Kill (long)

Kill a **guard** with a **slow melee attack**. Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Flintlock Pistol

A flintlock pistol with limited ammo.

Noise Radius 12.0
Range 10.0

Passive Abilities

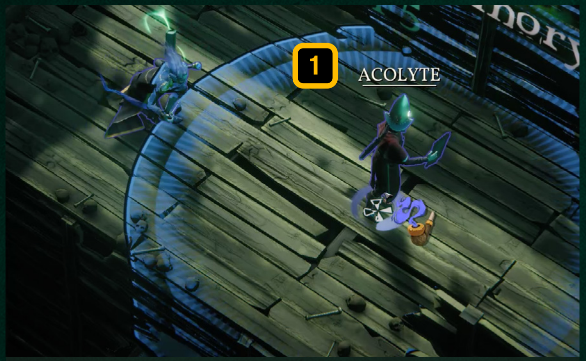
Cannot climb ivies

Cannot swim

Crouching body carry

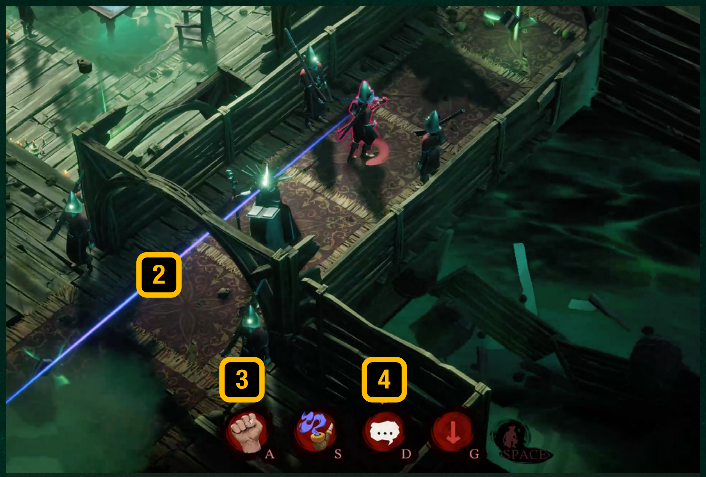
Pinkus prefers to get his job done by letting others do his work. This is why he likes to take control of other (human) beings with his **Peruse Mind ability**. While he is **in control of another body he stays hidden** which allows him to easily infiltrate heavily guarded places. He's the perfect **“Infiltrator” archetype**, operating behind enemy lines. His **skills** also include a **very effective distraction ability**: **Coins** when thrown **redirecting viewcones** momentarily.

Peruse Mind



Attack and take over

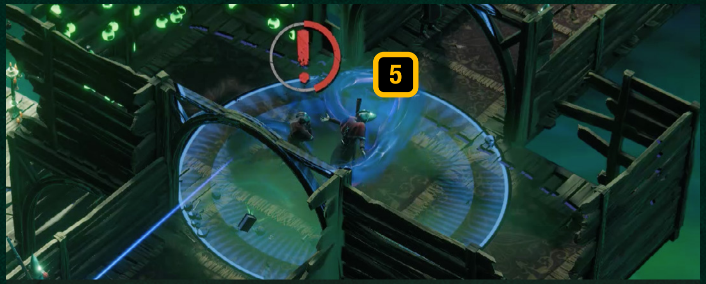
Pinkus can take control of the mind of an enemy. He will **slip into their bodies** which allows him to **move undetected through hostile areas** within a limited range, although this range is quite impressive. If you use **Peruse Mind** and “attack” a **guard** with it **[1]**, **Pinkus** gets a **new set of abilities** corresponding with the guard under control. He can **walk [2]** and even **take out other guards [3]**. You can also **engage other guards in conversations [4]**, which is a very effective distraction able to redirect a viewcone. It won't last forever though. **Peruse Mind** involves a lot. So let's look at this skill in some more detail...



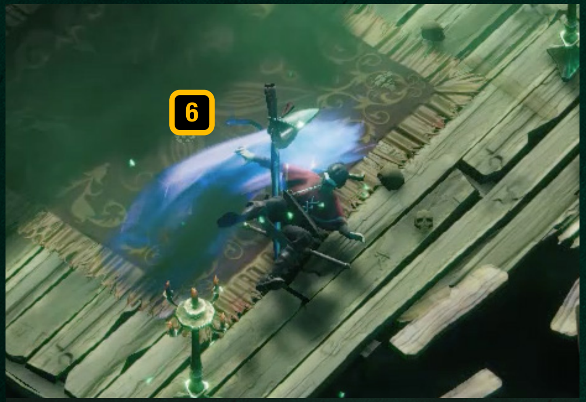
Just walk

Pinkus is not able to take control of stronger foes. However, as long as he stays hidden inside of someone else, he can even slip past **Prognosticars**.

As already mentioned, the **Peruse Mind** skill has limited range. However, you can use **Peruse Mind in sequence on another target** to let **Pinkus swap bodies [5]**. This will update the range to his current position. Be aware though that this is a hostile action and will cause alarm if seen by other **guards**.



Peruse Mind chain



Leave Mind

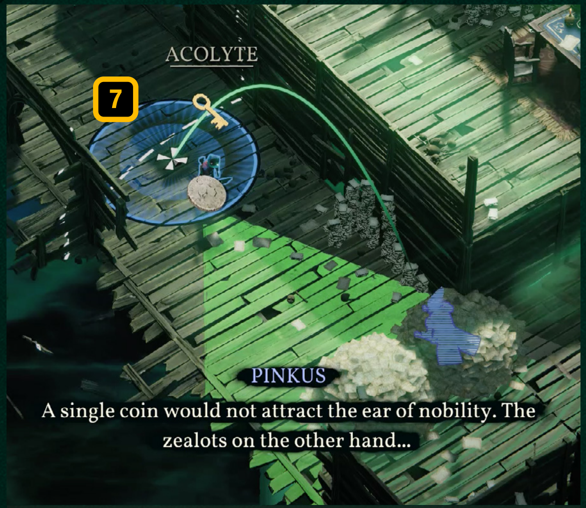
Finally and eventually, **Pinkus** has to leave the mind of others some time, right? Doing this will rematerialize him right at the spot, also **taking out the possessed guard at once [6]**.

One last thing for **Peruse Mind**: When **Pinkus** is in control of a **guard** and alarm is triggered, he will temporarily lose control over that **guard**. You can wait until the alarm runs out or you can make use of **Leave Mind** to let **Pinkus** leave the body immediately.

Coin

The **Coin** on the other hand is not quite as complex but a **classic distraction** for this type of game. The **Coin** can be thrown to **distract guards for a short time. Guards** that hear the **Coin** will **turn around and look at the source of the noise**. It's as simple as that. But it is also essential.

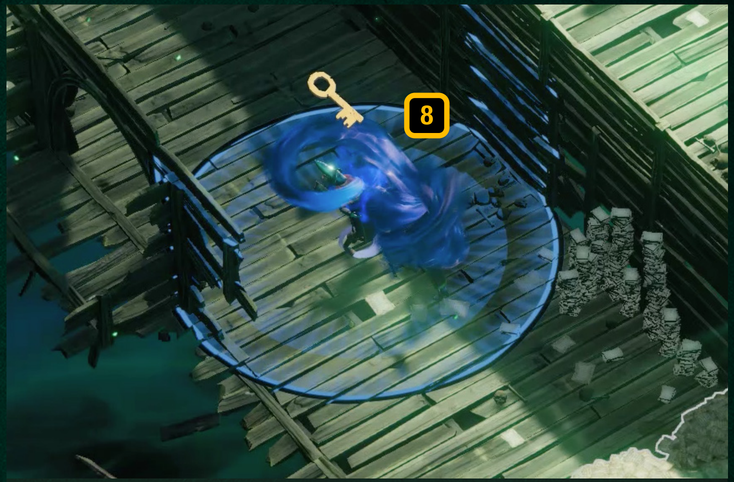
This is the single character standard skill combination you will use often for **Pinkus**: **Distract a guard with the Coin [7]** that you want to **take over with Peruse Mind [8]**.



PINKUS

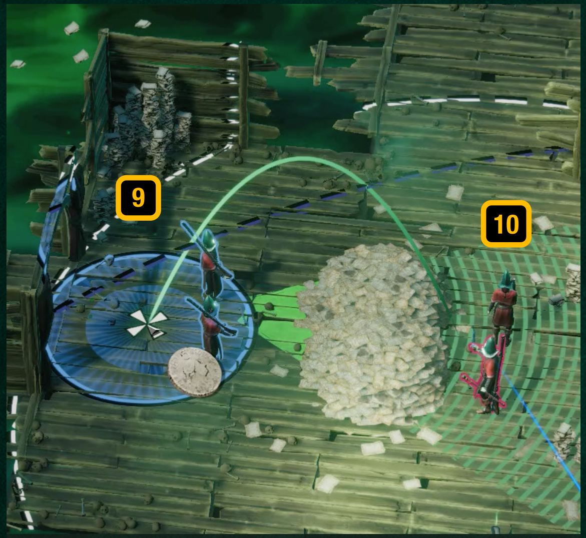
A single coin would not attract the ear of nobility. The zealots on the other hand...

Distract ...

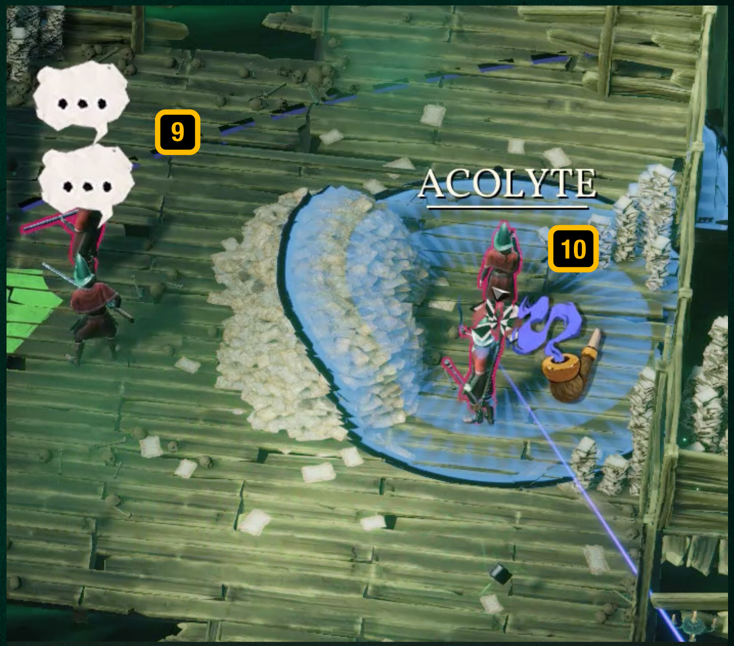


... attack and take over

In case you might have wondered what the swap arrow for the **Converse distraction** hides when **Pinkus** has control over a **guard**: He can use his **Coin when in control of a guard**. Simply swap and then use the **Coin** to distract the **group of guards [9]**, which let's you take over the one remaining **guard [10]**.

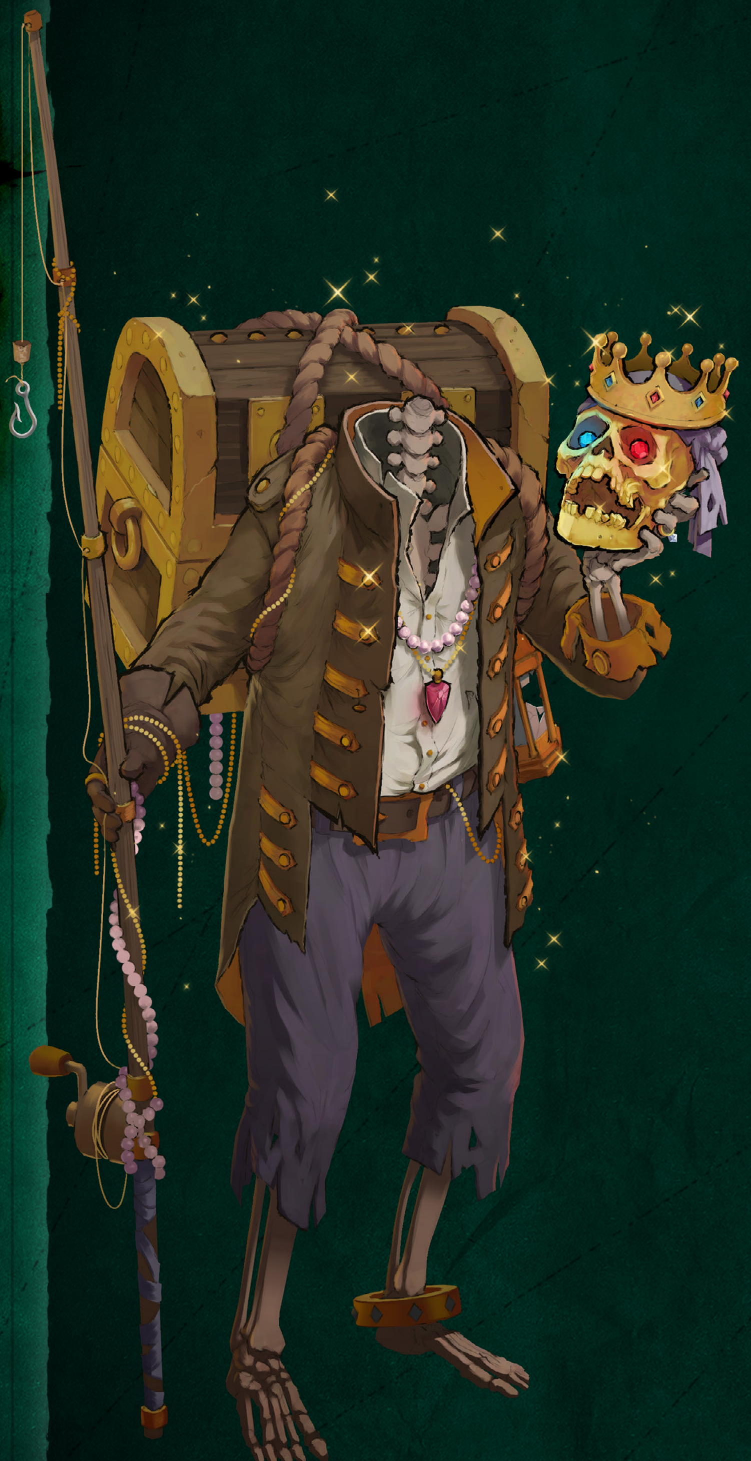


Distracting guards while controlling one



Use windows of opportunity

Pinkus seemingly simple skillset let's you do crazy things on missions and get him to places you wouldn't believe. Just wrap your head around it and get creative with **Peruse Mind** and look out for what is possible in teamplay across the **Cursed Crew**...



You gotta love **Quentin** for the character he is and has become. His **Treasure Rod** is insanely useful for supporting others while still being a tool for his very own interests, of course.

Quentin Aalbers

The Treasure Hunter - Doesn't like to share his treasures which makes his role on the **Marley** a bit peculiar. Lucky for **Quentin**, "peculiar" fits right in with the rest of the bunch. Don't touch his chest if you value your fingers.

Quentin stores his head in his chest among loads of other treasures. He fishes treasures from the ocean and constantly tries to haggle his **crewmates** for their valuables. He tried to buy the **Marley** once from her former captain.

Originally he came into the **Caribbean** following a grand tale about a great treasure that has been hidden somewhere between the strange isles. Upon arrival he searched and searched for the treasure but was unable to find it. Eventually he surrendered and started to pursue other treasures where he soon found a **Black Pearl** with which he promptly shot himself with, making him an even more prolific treasure hunter. After turning undead and amassing loads of treasures he starts to haggle other pirates for their artefacts.

During that stint he eventually encounters **Captain Mordechai** and the **Marley** where he promptly tries to buy a magical mirror from. The **Captain** offers the mirror under the condition that **Quentin** can convince the **Marley** to sell off the mirror. **Quentin** has been on the **Marley** ever since.

Archetypes

Position Changer: Capable of making guards leave their post for a while (one per team recommended).

Body Hider: Knows how to cover their tracks and leaves no body behind.

Signature Skills

Treasure Rod

A multi-use rod that **can pull objects** including **bodies** and even **crewmates** out of the fray and into **Quentin's** chest. Even sometimes allows you to **trigger levers** and similar things from afar. Also use it to **get back The Golden Head**!

Range 12.0
Cooldown 5.0s
Reel-In Time 2.0s

The Golden Head

Quentin takes off his golden head and throws it on the floor. Inexperienced **guards of the Inquisition** are usually **lured by its shininess** right to its location only to be stabbed in the back. It will be picked up, so use the rod to take it back.

Range 5.0

Cackling Cockle (Upgrade)

Quentin can **throw the cockle** somewhere to create a **constant source of noise**. The sound **lures guards** in, but they won't pick it up like The Golden Head.

Range 5.0
Noise Radius 6.0

Combat

Melee Kill (long)

Kill a **guard** with a **slow melee attack**. Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Flintlock Pistol

A flintlock pistol with limited ammo.

Noise Radius 12.0
Range 10.0

Passive Abilities

Can climb ivies

Can swim

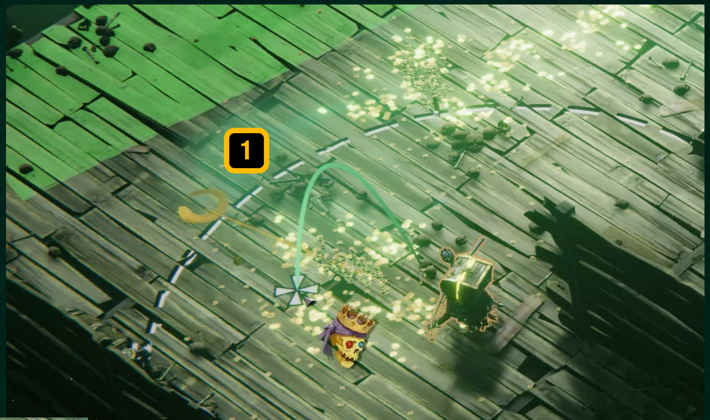
Crouching body carry

Quentin is great in **manipulating enemies** and **helping his crewmates from a safe distance**. With his skill **The Golden Head**, he can **lure guards away from their positions**. The **Treasure Rod skill** allows him to **pull all sorts of things towards him**, like **crewmates** and **bodies of guards**. He can also use the **Treasure Rod** to **interact with things from afar**.

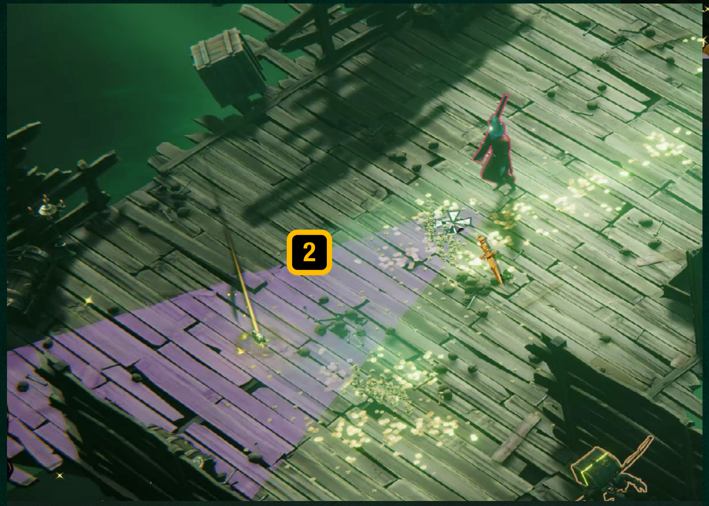
The Golden Head

Quentin is skilled in **throwing his shiny head some place and use it as bait**. **Guards** who see **The Golden Head** will **leave their position and try to pick it up**.

Here's how to do it: You **throw the Golden Head** directly into the viewcone of a **guard** or where the viewcone will be at some stage **[1]**. Then wait for the **guard** to move **[2]** until you can safely approach and take them out with a **melee attack**. Don't forget to pick the **Golden Head** up afterwards.



Heads it is



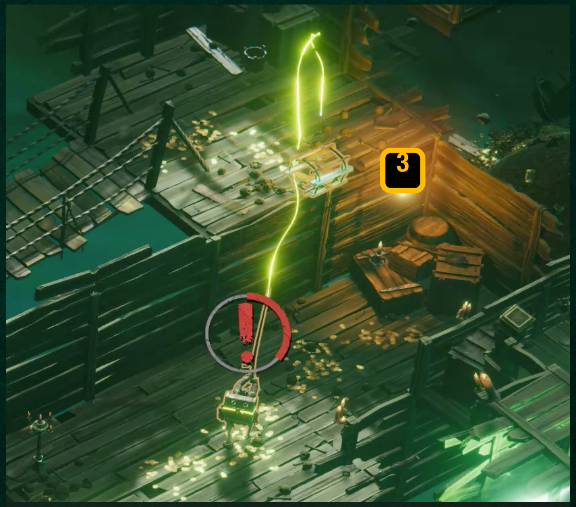
Luring the guard and ready to strike

You can also **snatch the Head from a guard** that grabbed it by **using the Treasure Rod**. We come to that in a moment.
Like with other distractions, only **minor guards like the Acolyte** will come and pick up the Head. Try your luck with **higher ranking guards** and you will at least get a **minor distraction** out of it, but **not much position changing**.

For a **mixed setup of guards** however, like with a **Commissarius** and an **Acolyte**, the **Golden Head** can be used to **break up the setup** though with one losing interest fast. Try it out in the field.

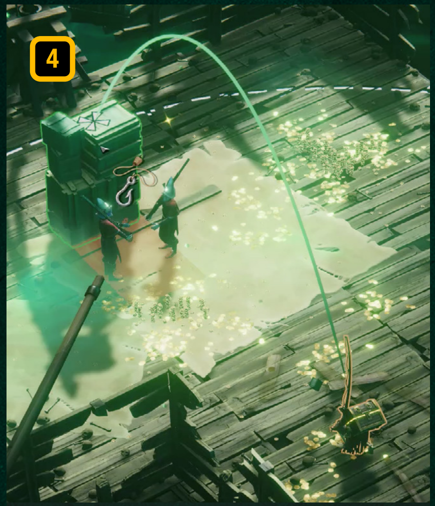
The Treasure Rod

Now, the **Treasure Rod skill** is a versatile tool for many situations and even more interesting than **Quentin's** shiny **Head** for a **position changing distraction**. With the rod you are able to **pull bodies** and even **crewmates** to **Quentin's position**. It also allows you to **interact with objects from a distance.** Levers for example. Even **snatching keys from guards** that carry them. In **[3]** you can see **Quentin pull down a ladder** for him and his crewmates to use. No one has to get up there to do that with the rod.

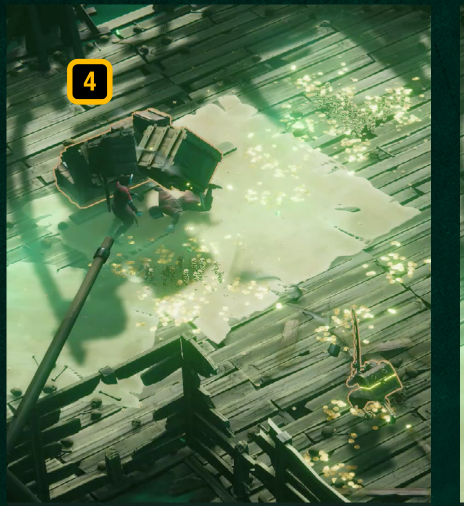


Grab that ladder

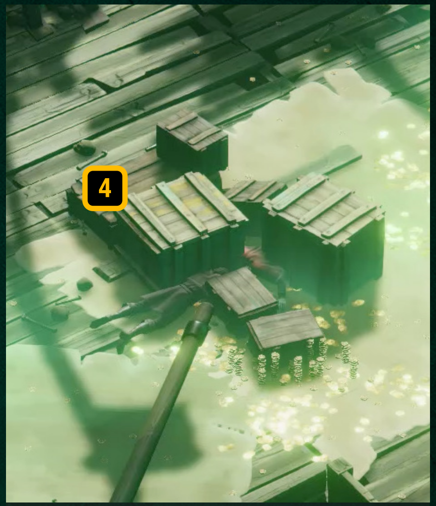
You can also use it for **triggering environment kills [4]**, provided that you find one of these great opportunities on your mission. Pay close attention to your surroundings and highlight interactive objects for help.



The Rod...

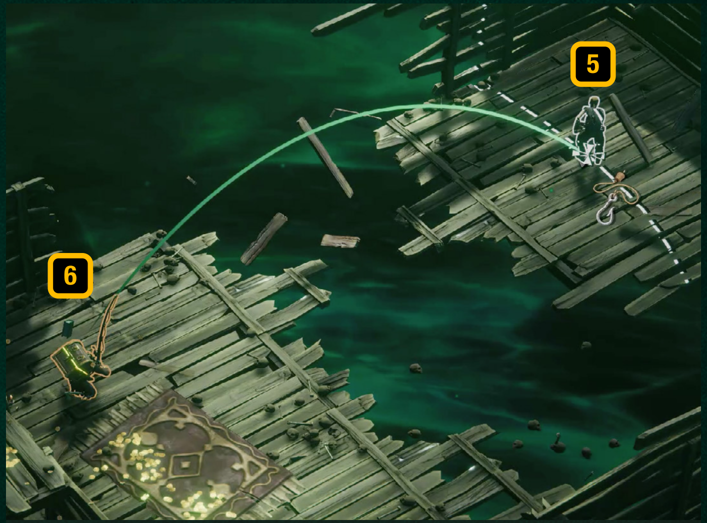


... and the damage...

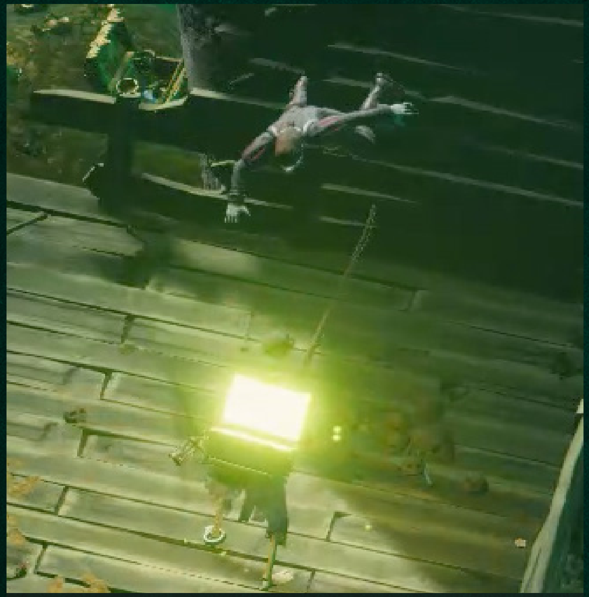


... done

The **Treasure Rod** can also be used to **help your crewmates [5] move a distance** by **pulling them towards Quentin's position [6]**. Luckily he won't put and keep them in his chest like other things for once.
This option is particularly helpful for **supporting characters that aren't able to climb ivies. Quentin** can and it's an easy thing for him to climb up just to pull up some crewmate like **Teresa** or **Pinkus** right **to his spot on top**.



Helping friendlies across

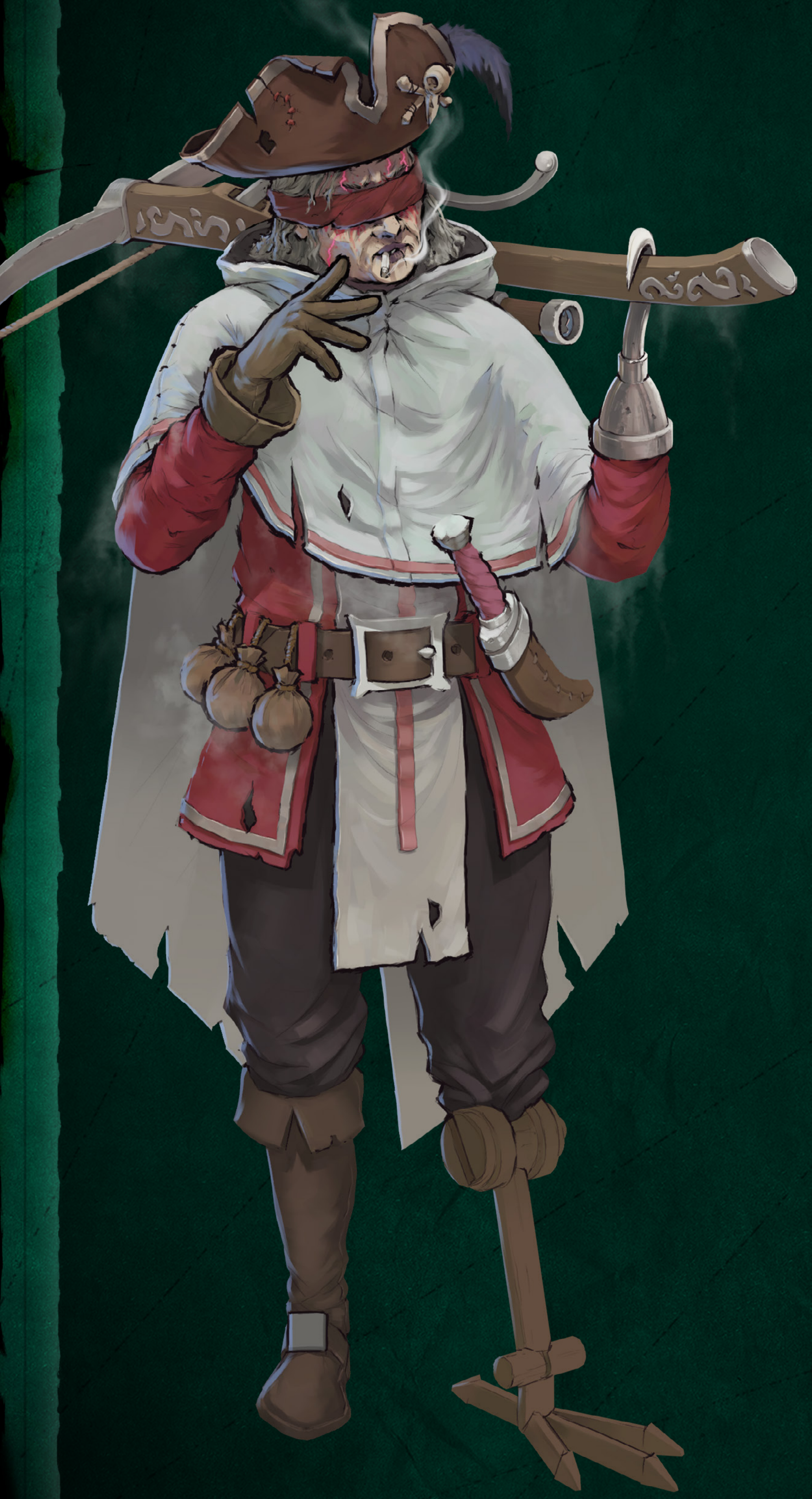


Spectacularly dispose of bodies

When it comes to **bodies of killed or knocked-out guards**, **Quentin** will just do the same but **instantly hide them in his chest forever**. He's a great **Body Hider archetype**.

There also doesn't have to be a great distance for him to manage it. **Quentin** can do this perfectly well right after a **melee kill** and **right at the spot**. But the real treat is, of course, to **get rid of bodies from a afar**, reaching spots that might still be watched by **guards** be it either **patrolling or static**.

Clean up the mess with **Quentin**! He's your headless man with a head and a rod.



Teresa is an absolute essential choice for the crew, literally extending the range of your abilities. Upgrading her signature skill "Iron Judgement" will change how you play the game when she's with you on mission...

Teresa la Ciega

The Sharpshooter - She lives in the crow's nest, casting her burned eyes towards the horizon. Teresa's sight can spy ships through stormy weather and find the smallest details on a crime scene. Her shots never miss.

Her nickname is "The White Crow" and she uses her own soul as her crossbow's ammunition.

Teresa is technically blind but senses her surroundings better than most seeing people. She was oncre a Iudex of the Inquisition many years ago, in a time when the Inquisition was still genuinely fighting for the good and protection of the people. She opposed the changes in the Inquisition and eventually was shunned and blinded for her contrarian beliefs.

While still being a part of the Inquisition, Teresa was set on the tail of Captain Mordechai in order to bring him to justice. When she finally found and confronted him, she blinked once and was defeated.Years later after she was already cast out from the Inquisition, the Captain saught her out asking her to join his crew on the Marley as he needed somebody with her skills.

Archetypes

Killer: Uses powerful skills to eliminate guards.

Sniper: Specialises in long-range attacks to take enemies out from far away.

Signature Skills

Iron Judgement

Can **shoot two kinds of Soul Energy arrows** over a **very large distance**, delivering either lethal or just temporary judgement. You only have one bolt, and it must be picked up once you use it.

Range 35.0
Noise Radius 7.0
Dying Duration 5.8s

Ashen Judgement

With a cloud of ash attached to the arrow, **guards** will **briefly be blinded**. But just like with **Iron Judgement** this happens over a **large distance**.

Range 35.0
Duration 5.5s
Cooldown 10.0s

Iron Judgement (Upgrade)

Upgrades the **skill** so that any **crewmate can pick up Teresa's soul-bolt** by walking over it. The bolt automatically returns to Teresa, no matter what distance.

Range 35.0
Noise Radius 7.0
Dying Duration 5.8s

Combat

Melee Kill (long)

Kill a **guard** with a **slow melee attack**. Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Flintlock Pistol

A flintlock pistol with limited ammo.

Noise Radius 12.0
Range 10.0

Passive Abilities

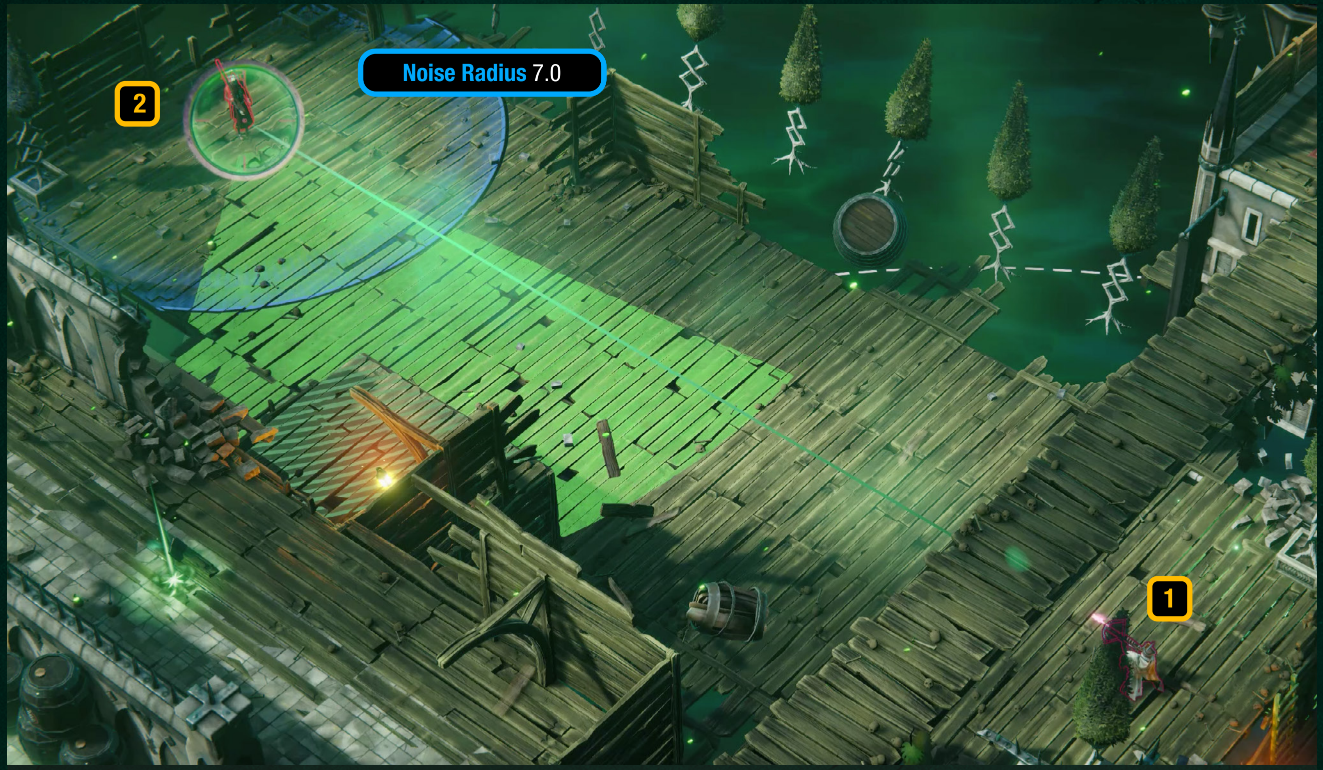
Cannot climb ivies

Cannot swim

Crouching body carry

Teresa is a **sharpshooter** who is most effective when she stays in the back, supporting her **crewmates** up front. Her **crossbow** allows her to **eliminate guards from far away**. She can also **blind guards temporarily** if she's in a situation where she can't make any noise. Let's look at these two skills in detail...

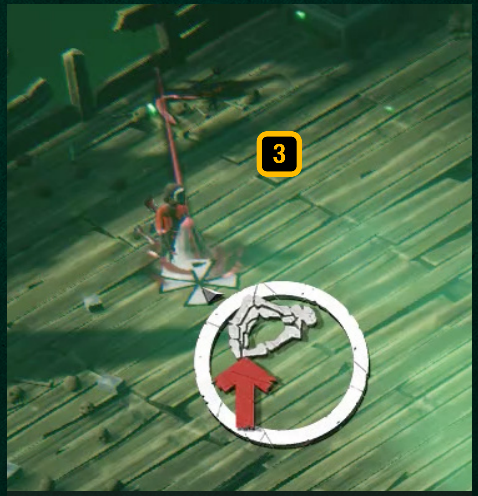
Iron Judgment allows **Teresa [1]** to **shoot targets like the Acolyte [2] from far away with her crossbow**. The **crossbow** itself is silent, but hitting the target with her soul is not. It will make good noise. So take the noise radius carefully into account that is **displayed on screen**. It is 7 in numbers and a bit smaller than **Toya's Bird's Voice** for example, which is 10. However, **Toya** uses noise for his advantage, with guards lured away for inspection, while **Teresa's** noise will instantly put **guards** within that radius in a state of alert.



Huge distances need panoramic views for display

Remember to **pick up your bolt afterwards [3]**. You only have one. One soul, one bolt. Only **Teresa is able to pick up her own soul and bolt**, unless you spend your hard earned **Vigor** for buying the **Iron Judgement upgrade** at the **upgrade store back at the Marley.** This would allow **anyone from the crew** to **pick up the bolt and automatically teleport it back to Teresa**. A game changer for this mighty skill, becoming evener more powerful.

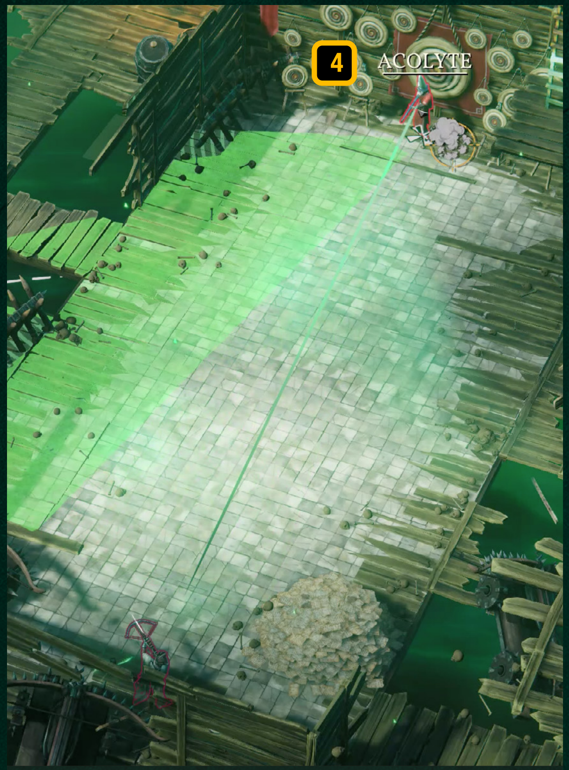
Select your targets carefully by all means! Don't ever leave the bolt in a position where **Teresa** cannot retrieve it. Remember that she **cannot climb ivies** for instance and **cannot swim** either. So don't shoot straight into **places that are hard to reach for her**, which includes **spots closely guarded and blocked** by interlocked viewcones. It seems an easy decision to take out some **Iudex** on **top of a watchtower**. But it might just happen that you cannot retrieve your single bolt for quite some time when you could have used it better and more efficiently in the meantime.



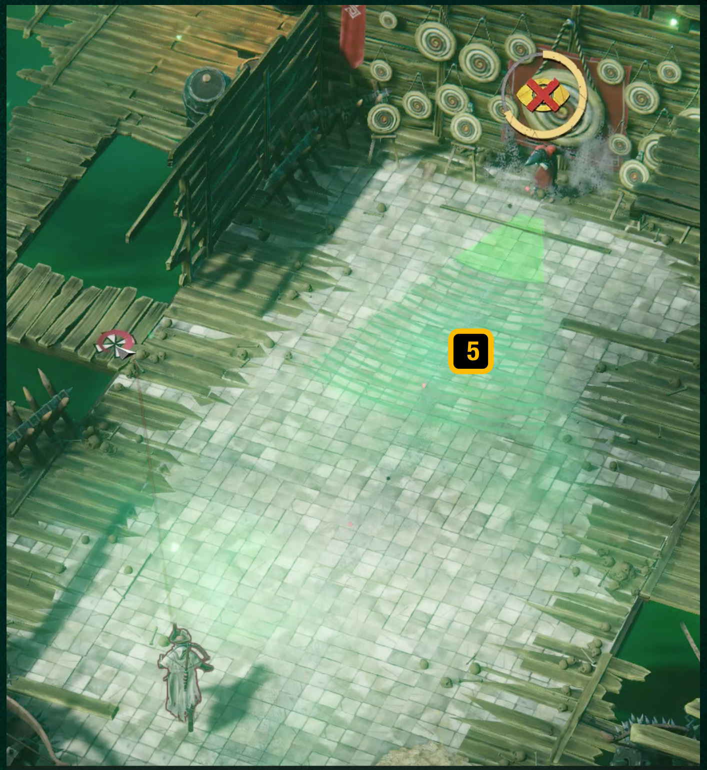
Grab that Soul Bolt

Ashen Judgement

Ashen Judgment allows **Teresa** to **blind targets over vast distances [4]**. This will both **shorten guards' viewcones for a few seconds** and **make them static for that short period of time** - 5 seconds that is **[5]**.

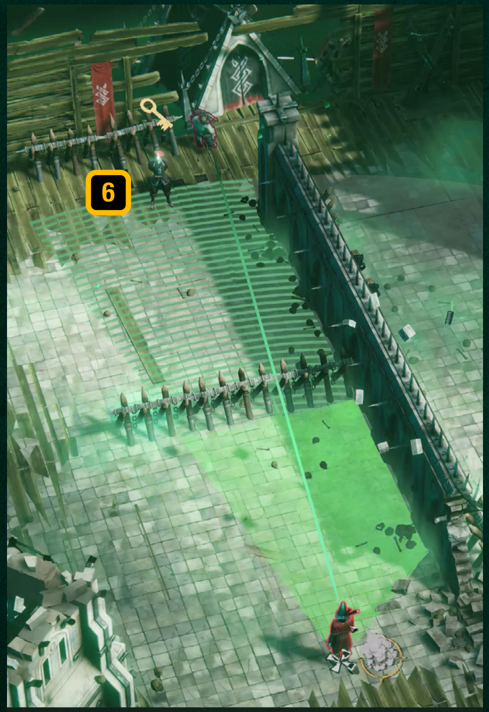


Exit blocked by viewcone

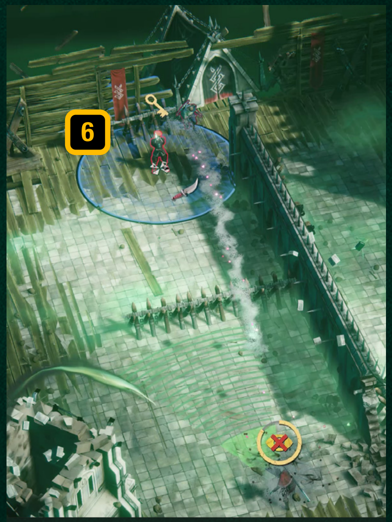


Freeze and shorten that viewcone and run

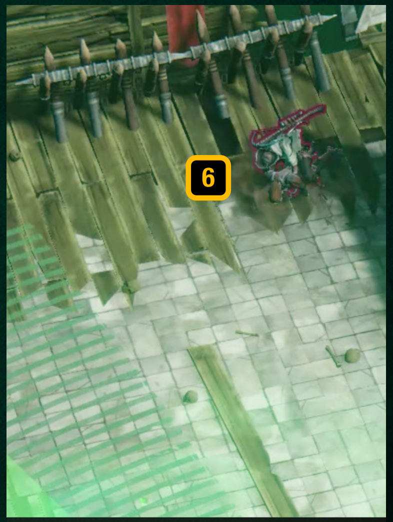
As with all the other **distraction skills**, the **duration of Ashen Judgment varies for different guard types**. The **Commissarius** for example will recover faster than **Acolytes**. So you distract the **Acolyte** for having a better window of opportunity in **[6]** to take out the **Commissarius**.



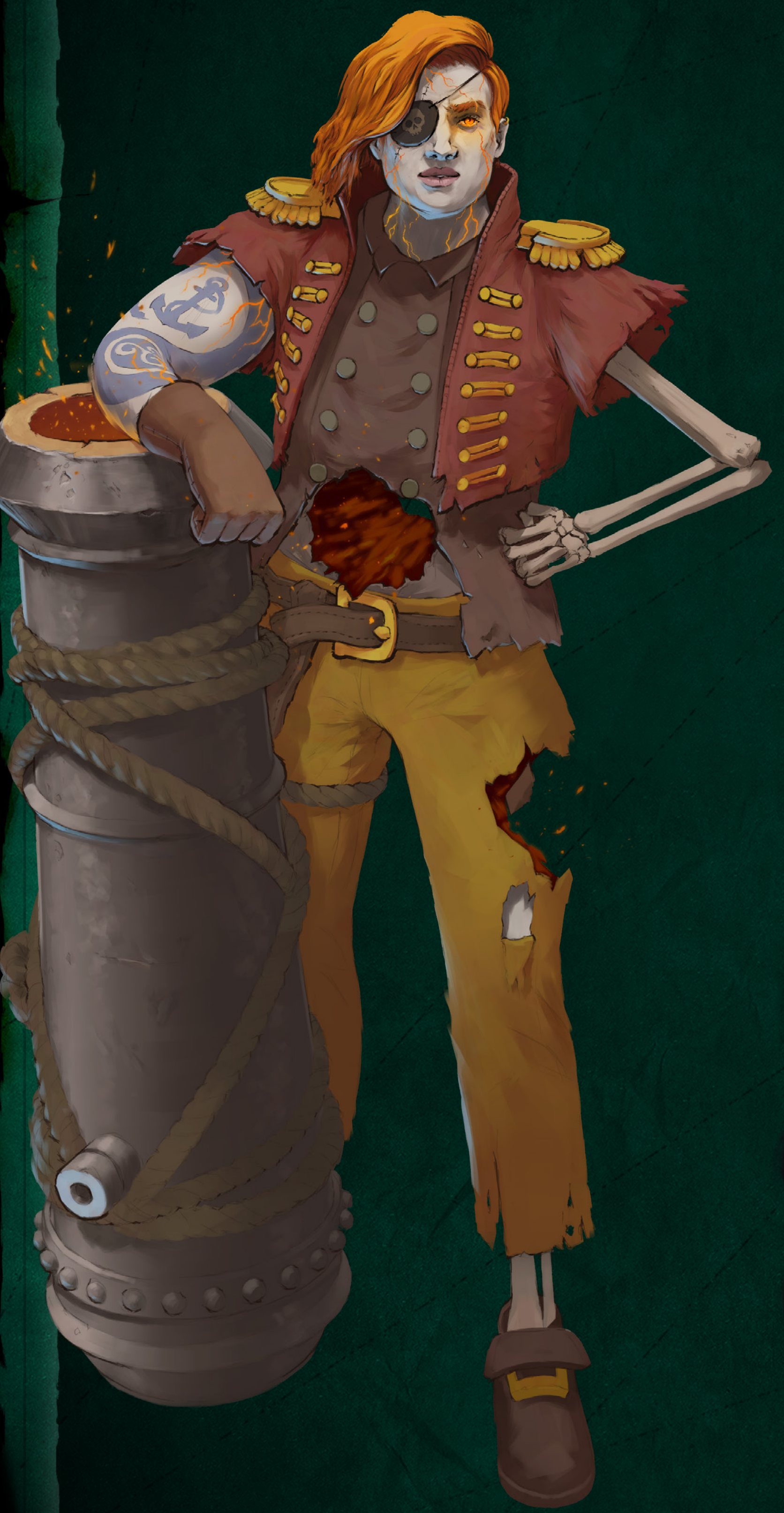
Distract the Acolyte...



... for more time to strike



In a nick of time!



Another game changer and a great character for experimentation in the sandbox. **Gaëlle** and her **Kanol** are the prime method of transportation in the game: Spectacularly shooting **crewmates** and **guards** across the map easily overshadows her unbelievably valuable ability that is **Kanol Racall**. The only thing that matters is a clear line of sight and you will pull **crewmembers** back into your **Kanol** from any spot on any island.

Gaëlle le Bris

Master Canoness - Whatever weapons and canons need tending to, **on the Marley Gaëlle** is here to fix, fire and maintain them.

Gaëlle carries a cannon on her back in which she forces friends and enemies inside. She's able to shoot them around. Never shoots an actual cannonball. Secretly she's a bit of a lyricist and writes poetry sometimes. Being much taller and stronger than others, she tends to overestimate the strength of others.

After turning undead she had to hide from the **Inquisition**. She earned her stay in a tavern where she bet that she could beat the entire crew of other ships in armwrestling competitions. Word about her unholy strength got around until **Captain Mordechai** came and invited her **on the Marley**.

Archetypes

Position Changer: Capable of making guards leave their post for a while (one per team recommended).

Infiltrator: Operates and navigates behind enemy lines.

Signature Skills

Kanol Recall

Gaëlle's Kanol comes equipped with a **magical rope** that ropes **crewmates** into the **Kanol** before they know what's happening. Load any crewmate within **clear line of sight**. Switches to unload as soon as there's someone in the **Kanol**.

Range 1000.0
Duration 2.5

Fire Kanol

Her **Kanol** which is Breton for "cannon" can **shoot any (un)willing person** as far as the eye can see, knocking them - and whoever she's aiming at - out cold. **Guards** that are shot with the Kanol are automatically tied up.

Range 17.0
Noise Radius 4.0

Firecracker

These selfmade firecrackers make a **hell of a noise** and **attract attention** close by. They are also pretty to look at at night.

Range 12.0
Noise Radius 6.0
Cooldown 12.5s

Load Kanol (Upgrade)

Gaëlle improves her **Melee Attack**, which increases her attack speed and enables her to **instantly load targets into her Kanol**. In addition, her **Firecracker** skill gains a **larger noise radius**.

Combat

Melee Kill (long)

Kill a **guard** with a **slow melee attack**. Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Flintlock Pistol

A flintlock pistol with limited ammo.

Noise Radius 12.0
Range 10.0

Passive Abilities

Cannot climb ivies

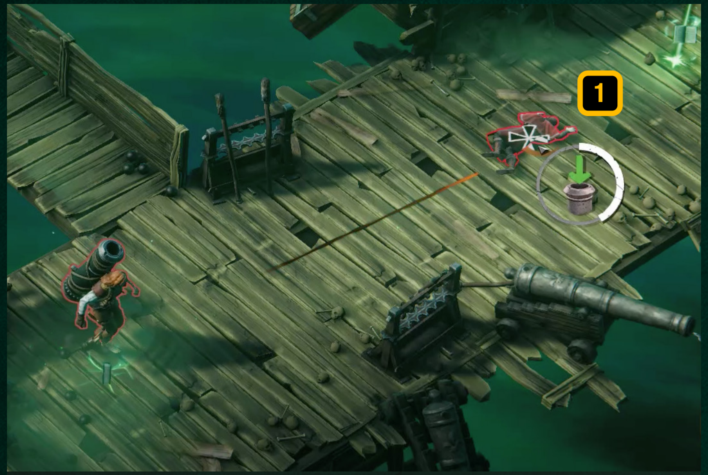
Cannot swim

Crouching body carry

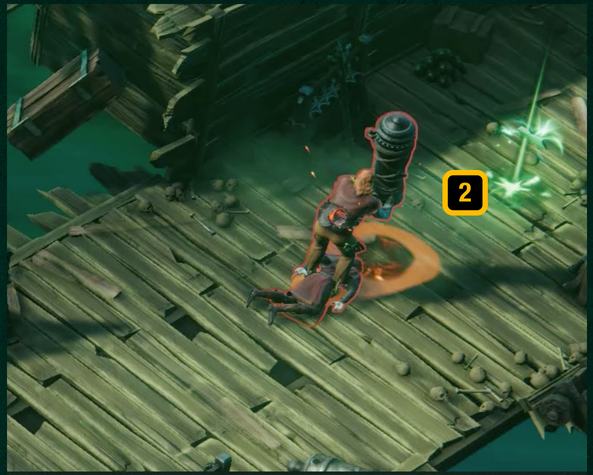
Gaëlle le Bris carries a Kanol that fires bodies instead of cannonballs. What a remarkable talent that is! She can load crewmates into the Kanol across large distances to shoot them into out-of-reach places. She' also able to shoot guards into other guards knocking them out from a distance. In addition, her Firecracker skill allows her to distract guards and lure them into traps and ambushes.

Kanol

The Kanol skill splits into several possible actions, basically loading and firing. Gaëlle can use her Kanol to shoot crewmates and guards to different locations. Saying that this is a helpful tool to infiltrate Inquisition bases or to knockout guards that are otherwise out of reach is an understatement.



Choose the body...



... and right into the Kanol

Gaëlle can load dead, knocked-out or tied-up guards [1] into her Kanol. Simply pick the body up to automatically load the body into your Kanol [2].

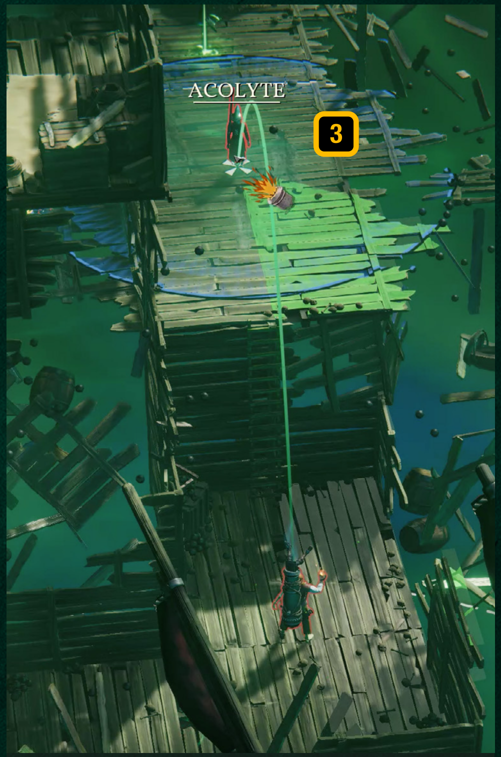
A straightforward use is hiding bodies, for example by shooting them right into a bush or any spot that isn't observed by guards for that matter. Out of the way, out of sight.

But it becomes more interesting than that: You can use Fire Kanol to knock out guards with *all* you packed into the Kanol. That's right!

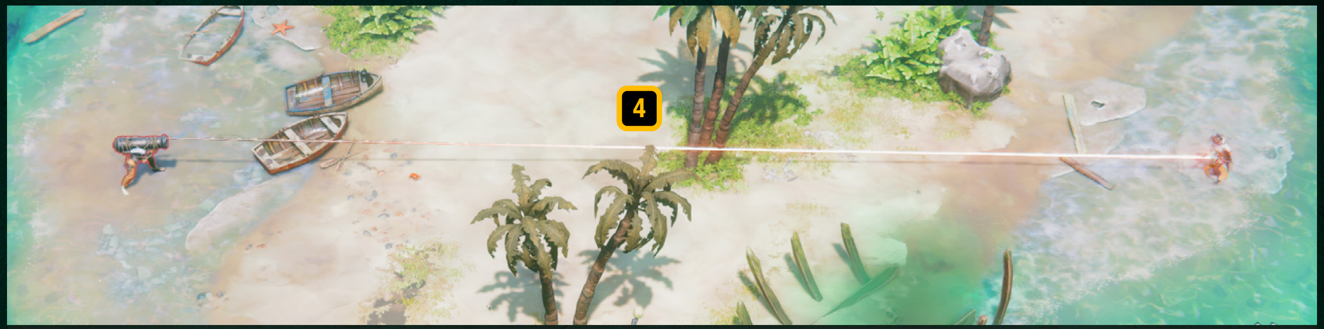
You have to be careful though as knocked-out guards that have been shot with a tied-up or dead guard will wake up eventually, inspecting the crime scene, likely to find the tied up body they've been shot with. If Gaëlle can reach the spot of the knocked-out guard like in [3] easily and also before they wake up, you can just load the unconscious guard right into the Kanol to automatically tie them up. Or you can do this with teamplay switching to a crewmate that is close by and in a better position.

Kanol Recall

Let's give this remarkable skill it's own headline. Kanol Recall is used for pulling your crewmates into the Kanol. This works from *any distance*. You read it here first! See for instance what happens at the Beach here at [4]. Only the line of sight matters. This "transport" skill for crewmates works like Teresa's Iron or Ashen Judgement skill for pullling your mates across the map. Or like Quentin's Treasure Rod for any distance not blocked by an obstacle.

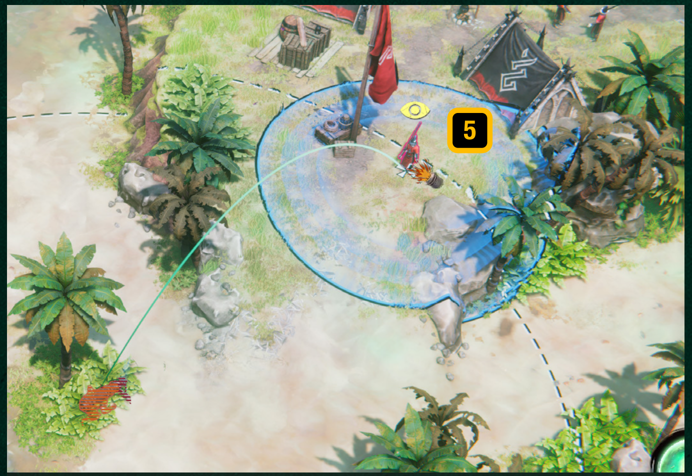


Shoot to knock'em out

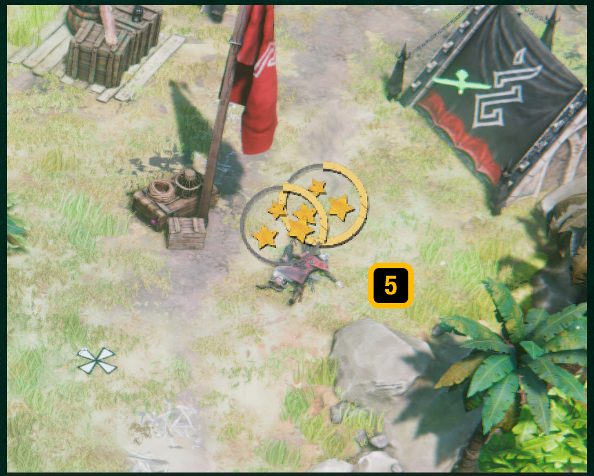


Only the clear line of sight matters with Kanol Recall

Once you have one of your mates in the Kanol, you can shoot them to a spot you like and perhaps one they cannot reach. If you decide to shoot your crewmate to knock-out a guard like in [5], the one who is able to tie that guard up is already right at the spot. So you quickly switch to that crewmate and do it. Good news: Your crewmate will **recover from the action faster than the guard shot**. You are fine - with a headache maybe.



It will be a knock-out...

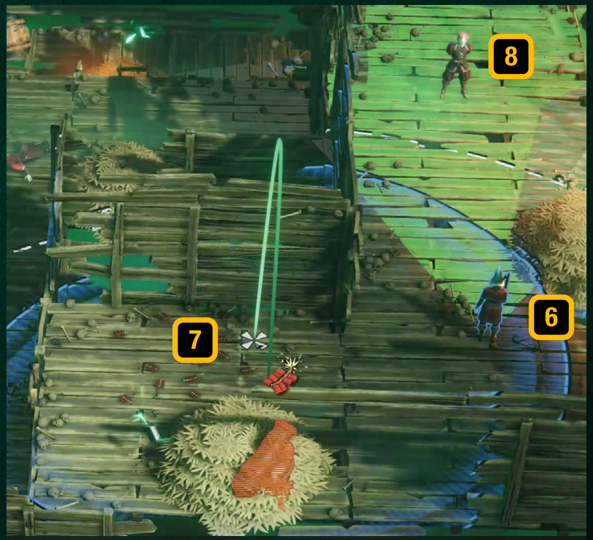


... for both

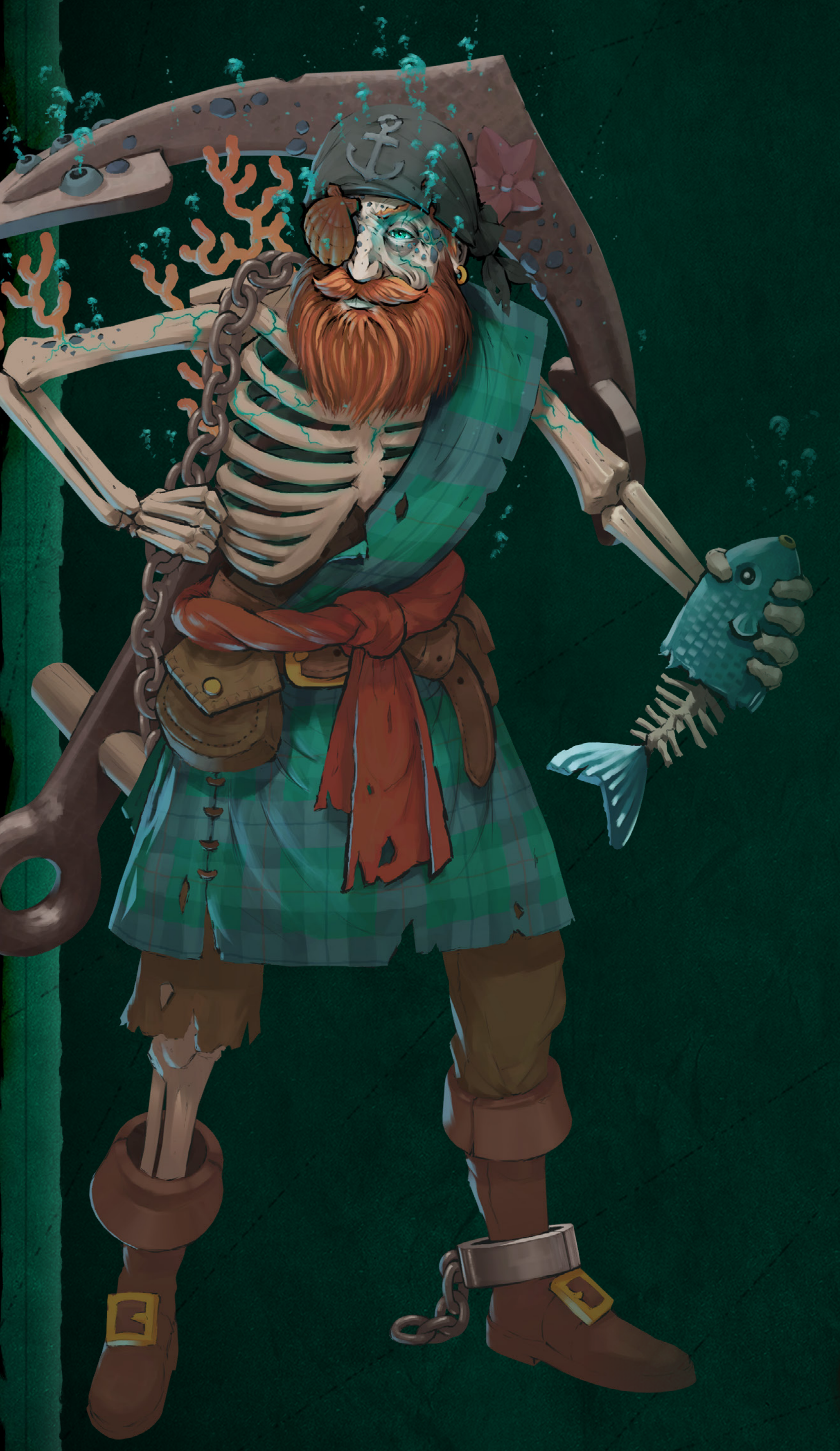
A last option before you become creative with all that yourself in the game: You can unload your Kanol without shooting it by using the skill Empty Kanol. Gaëlle will immediately drop whoever is currently in the Kanol. Guards will always exit the Kanol tied up, unless they're already... dead.

Firecracker

With the Kanol being such an interesting skill, Gaëlle's effective Firecracker distraction skill, able to lure guards, sounds almost like an afterthought. It works a bit like Toya's Bird's Voice with a smaller noise radius of 6.0 if you were able to throw the flute. Here's an idea: **Lure the Acolyte [6] out of sight to [7].** Take him or her out and then into your Kanol. Then shoot right at the Commissarius [8] to knock him out.



Luring with Firecrackers



Last in line by random choice is **John**. His **abilities** take a bit getting used to. A bit more than with other **members of the Cursed Crew** probably. But as soon as you get the hang of it, you probably stick with him. The paths he takes by **controlling the Below with his anchor skills** make him a great infiltrator among many other things.

John Hughes Mercury

The Shipwright - Caretaker of the **Marley**. You can always see him scurrying around, hammering some ghost nails back in place or scrubbing the deck.

John is the slightly deranged but beloved carpenter of the Marley. He carries a sizeable **anchor** on his back which allows him to **jump in and out of the Below**. Also has a **fish companion** called **Sir Reginald** with whom only he can converse. He enjoys singing shanties and often tries to animate his **crewmates** into joining him in. Terrible at playing cards.

He used to be a carpenter on a "regular" pirate ship. During a mutiny in the making he got tied up, then accidentally shot with a **Black Pearl**, tied to an anchor and thrown into the ocean. "Blessed" with the curse of the wayward souls now, he started wandering the bottom of the sea where he met **Sir Reginald**. After walking on the ocean floor for a long while, **John** and **Sir Reginald** see long anchorchain hanging in the water down from from the surface. Tangled up with it, both got pulled up to the **Marley**. Ever been there since.

Archetypes

Body Hider: Knows how to cover their tracks and leaves no body behind.

Infiltrator: Operates and navigates behind enemy lines.

Signature Skills

Anchor Down

John is able to use his anchor to **quickly open a portal to the Below** where he can **hide** forever if needed. Gives **new skills like Anchor Up**. Only available if you are not already in the Below. Can also be used on bodies to hide them.

Duration 0.7s
Cooldown 3.0s

Anchor Up

He can luckily also **return through another portal** and use the force of his entry to jolt the anchor up in the air and **whack an enemy dead** with it. So, emerge at some spot or right at a guard to send them into the Below. Can also be used directly on **bodies** to make the **disappear**.

Range 12.0
Noise Radius 5.5
Cooldown 5.0s

Sir Reginald

Sir Reginald doesn't mind taking a look around and enjoys jumping out of the below. Most people react quite surprised, when they see him. **Creates noise, distracts enemies**!

Range 12.0
Noise Radius 3.0
Cooldown 8.0s

Pull Below (Upgrade)

Unlocks the **Pull Below ability**. John can now **hide his crewmates in the Below** to pull them out of danger or to prepare for an ambush.

Combat

Melee Kill (long)

Kill a **guard** with a **slow melee attack**. Comes with a **non-lethal knockout**.

Noise Radius 3.0
Dying Duration 5.0s

Flintlock Pistol

A flintlock pistol with limited ammo.

Noise Radius 12.0
Range 10.0

Passive Abilities

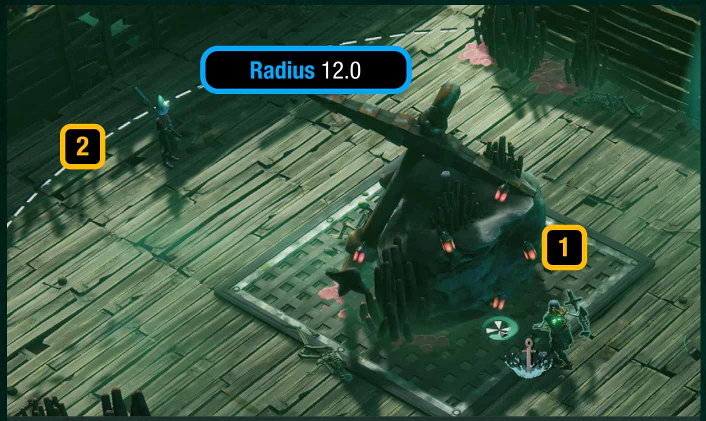
- Can climb ivies
- Can swim
- Crouching body carry

John Hughes Mercury is a strong “Infiltrator” archetype who can hide in the Below. From there, he can pass by small obstacles or attack guards. When striking from the Below he can even make guards disappear, which makes him also a strong “Body Hider” archetype. On top of that, John is able to call his little friend Sir Reginald to distract nearby enemies. Let's go through his skills in detail as they take some effort getting used to...

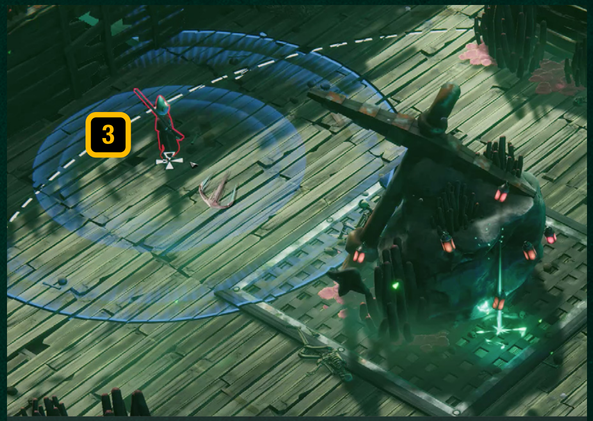
The Below

John can hide in the Below using his Anchor Down skill. He can then use Anchor Up to attack guards and make their bodies disappear into the Below at the same time. This is an awesome combination well at your service as both an Infiltrator and Body Hider. Especially because John is not only able to hide in the Below, but actually travel *through* the Below to get to difficult-to-reach locations.

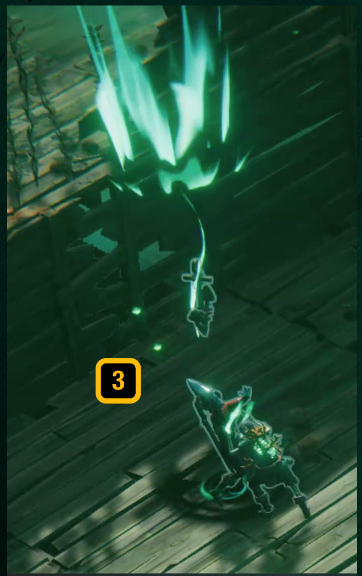
Use the Anchor Down skill to enter the Below and **prepare your strike**. Select the skill and target a safe location [1], like behind the obstacle here, all while **keeping the** guard **in range** [2]. If John is in the Below - you can see where he left at the spot [1] - the Anchor Up skill will automatically be selected. You can now target the guard [3] to strike *and* make them disappear.



Select the safe entry point

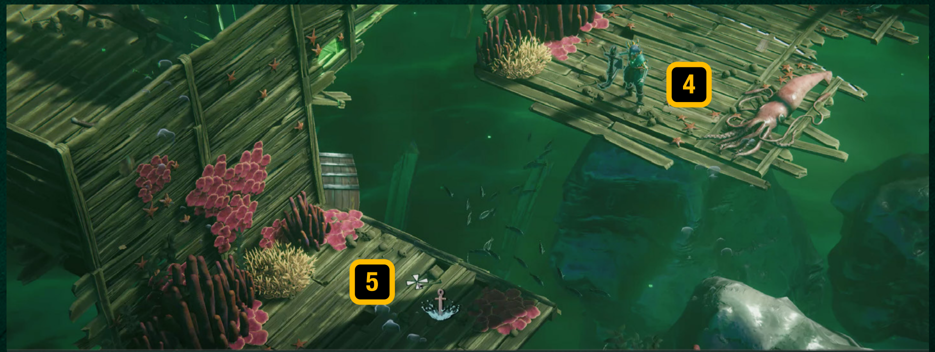


Set you anchor (up)

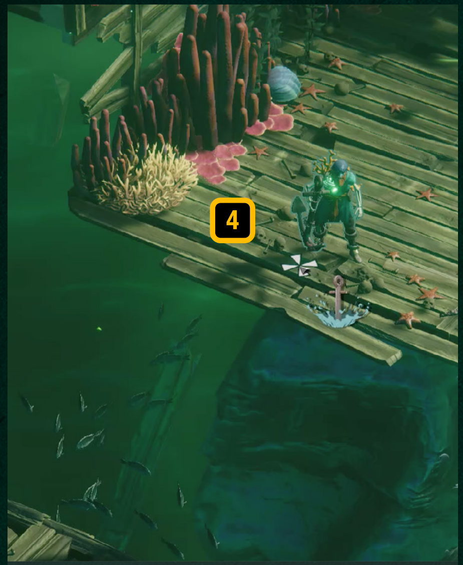


Anchor down with “up”

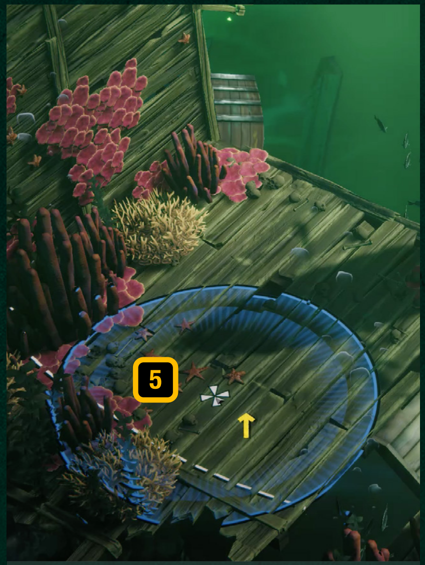
The Anchor Up skill is **dead useful for getting around**. John can emerge at any location that is within his range and at the same height as him. You can use the Anchor Down skill to enter the Below, then target a location across the gap from [4] to [5] to get past it. Dont' get confused by how to set it up correctly: You set the *entry point* into the Below with Anchor Down at [4] and *not* the spot you want to emerge [5], which comes in the second step with Anchor Up.



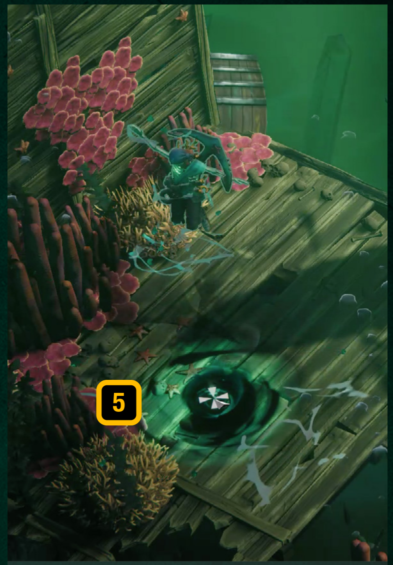
Not the way to set crossing the gap up



Entry point with Anchor Down



Exit point with Anchor Up...

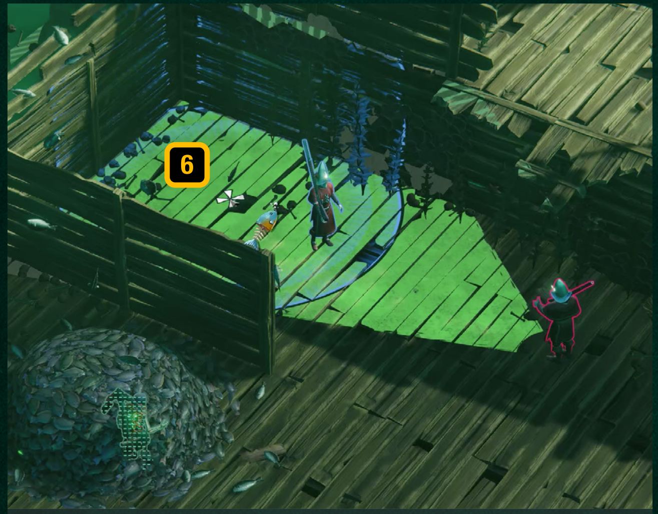


... to resurface

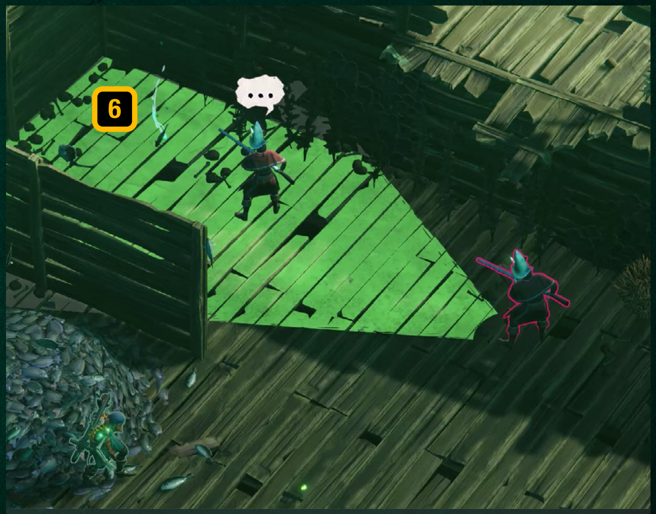
You can also use Anchor Down to hide bodies if you set the entry point into the Below right at a guard's body with Anchor Down. Like a body flushed down the drain! Very useful and another benefit for John the ”Body Hider”.

Sir Reginald

John's skillset also includes a distraction with Sir Reginald, his fish companion. The same distraction rules apply to fish: Acolytes are more easily and effectively distracted, but even they **won't be lured by the attractive fish**. Sir Reginalds effect is directly comparable to to Pinkus' Coin distraction skill with a slightly smaller noise radius of 3, compared to the Coin's 3.5.



Let Sir Reginal surface fro the Below



See the Acolytes both being distracted

Note that in situation [6] both Acolytes are distracted. This is not due to Sir Reginald's range though, as the Acolyte to the right is way **out of range for the** distraction's noise radius. This is because the Acolytes are **“linked” by their conversation** and will act a bit like the more impressive Kindred Sisters from the Inquisition. Use such **group properties** to your advantage and be aware that the conversation partners are sensitive to anything that happens to their counterpart.

THE INQUISITION OF THE BURNING MAIDEN

The **Inquisition** is a religious army dedicated to the eradication of the **Cursed** and **Soul Energy**. They worship a messiah figure called the **Burning Maiden**, use a strange white flame called **"Maiden's Fire"** to battle the **Cursed** and work tirelessly to realize the **Maiden's** enigmatic **"Grand Design"**.

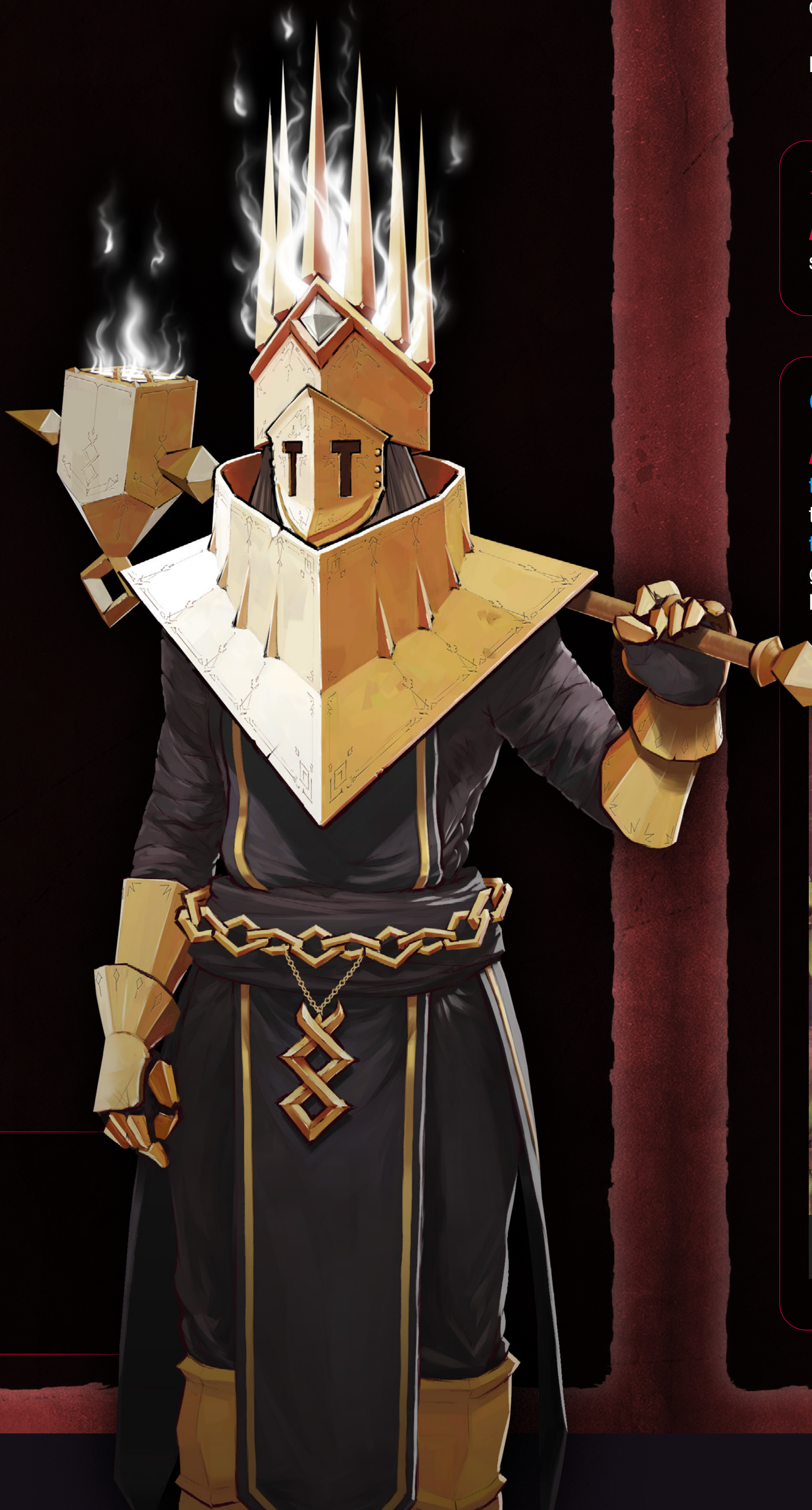
The Maiden & the Maiden's Fire

The burning of the **Maiden's** body is bound to an iron frame at the heart of her grand cathedral. Still alive, she suffers endlessly to serve as a never ending source of **Maiden's Fire**, the otherworldly flame that can destroy **Soul Energy**. It's a white flame with supernatural powers, seen as holy by the **Inquisition**. Used to fight and purge **Lost Souls**. It grants hazy visions of the future to those that come near it.

The Grand Design

For generations the **Inquisition** has documented visions granted by the **Maiden's Fire**. Scholars have pieced together a "Holy Scripture" from these visions, which describe a perfect version of the world called **"The Grand Design"**.

The **Grand Design** dictates all aspects of life for those of the **Inquisition**. It is their mission to enforce the **Grand Design** everywhere they go. It describes all aspects of life in great detail, from how to properly wake up in the morning to grand concepts like the organizational structure of the **Inquisition**.



IGNACIA

Inquisition commander, nemesis of the **Red Marley and her crew**. She's a natural leader with unbreakable determination. A ruthless pragmatist that comes with a God Complex.

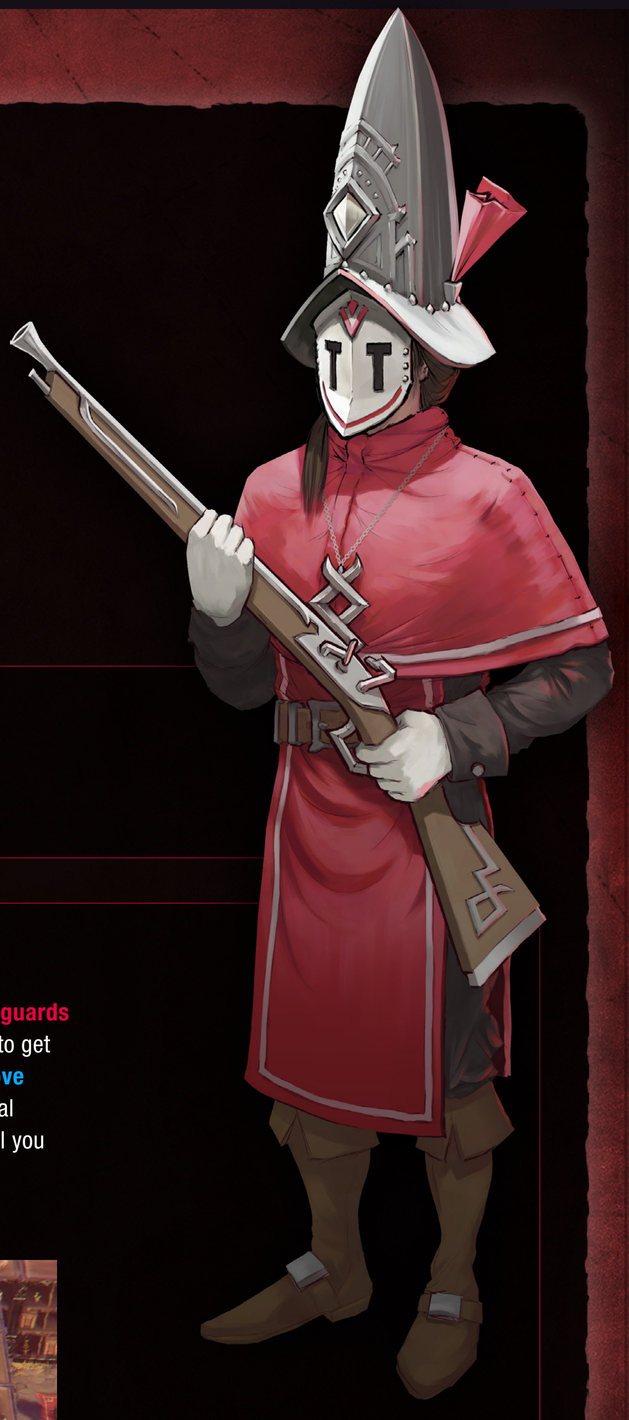
Ignacia dedicated her life to realizing the **Grand Design**, the **Inquisition's** ultimate vision of how the world should be. As the main antagonist of the **Cursed Crew**, she's obsessed with the **Marley's** power to rewrite the world through memories, which she sees as the key to realizing the **Grand Design**, even if it means defying **Inquisition** dogma.

Her skills resemble those of **Progosticars** as she is also able to freeze **crewmembers** in time. But **Ignacia** never ceases to surprise you with all she does along the journey.

Fate's Hammer

Ignacia wields a giant branding hammer imbued with **Maiden's Fire**. With it, she can destroy the undead, seal off their power or imprint her will into their soul. She uses her hammer to defy our cursed magic and to reforge the **Marley's** memories.

Great skills that define your **crewmates'** abilities **need great opponents** answering to them. **Ignacia** won't be there all the time, so it's time to take a closer look at what **types of guards** you're up against with the **Inquisition**.



ACOLYTE

Inquisition footsoldier, mostly tasked with guard duty or delivering messages.

Acolytes are capable soldiers, pious believers, eager to seek out sin and corruption. When on patrol, they often speak in dogma and prayer.

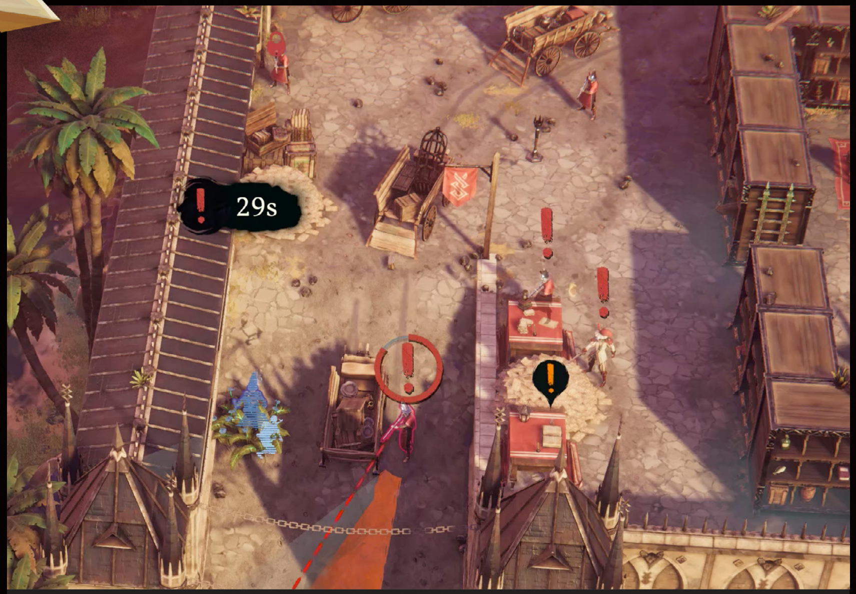
But they are also easily fooled as they are quite inexperienced.

No Special Power

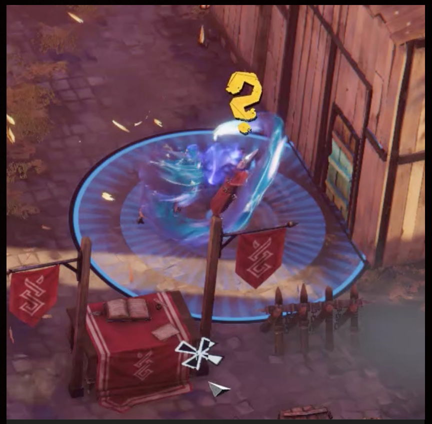
Acolytes don't have special powers but will shoot at you on sight, that's for sure. Actually, their greatest power is their sheer number in setups.

Common Strategies

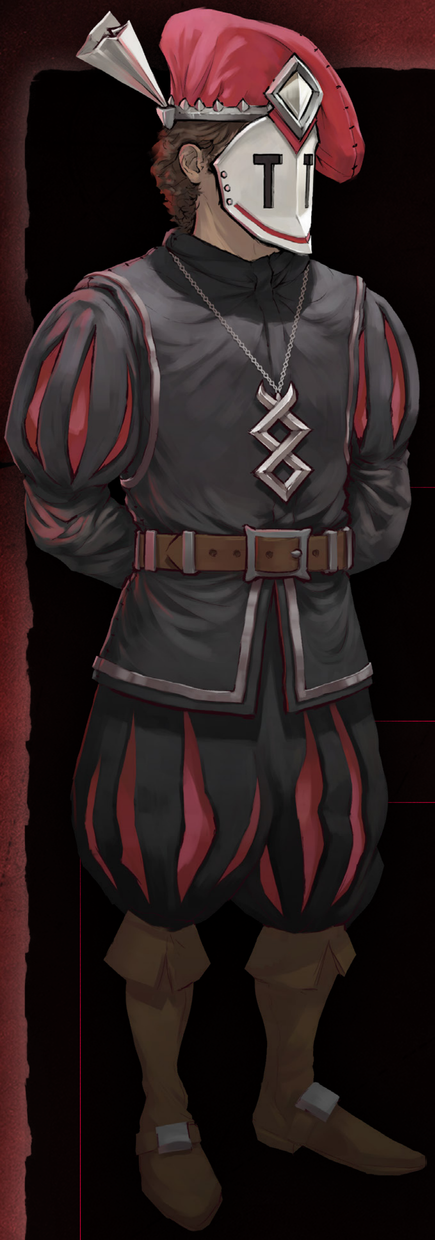
Acolytes are the most common and frequent **guard type**. They are usually the **first guards to distract, isolate and take out** (see chapter on **"Essential Strategies"**) in order to get to the more powerful **guard types**, that are more difficult to handle. **Irritate and move them around on the playfield** with your **distraction skills** as these are the essential guards for flow and sandbox creativity. These are the **guards** that respond best to all you have in the **skillbook**.



An Acolyte detecting a crewmate raising alarm for all the others



Pinkus becoming an Acolyte



COMMISSARIUS

Military overseers for the Inquisition that rose from the rank of Acolyte by strictly following orders and abiding to the Laws of the Grand Design.

They are professional, follow orders, don't fall for most distractions.
But they can't really think outside the box.

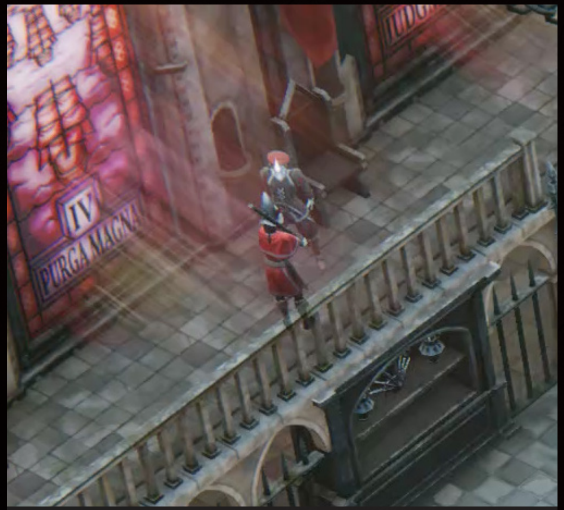
No Special Power

Once agitated, they will come after you, look for you, but otherwise will hold position. Their ability to withstand distractions is their major strength, especially when compared to the Acolytes they command.

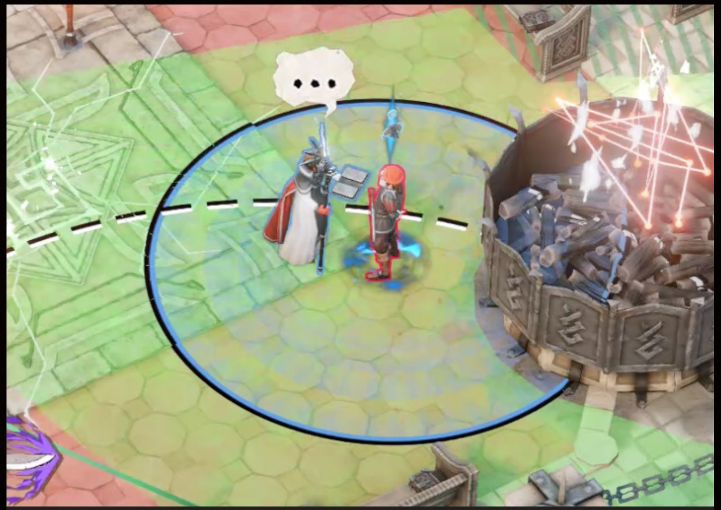
Common Strategies

The Commissarius is the second most frequent guard type. You usually work yourself through the Acolytes in setups to get to them.

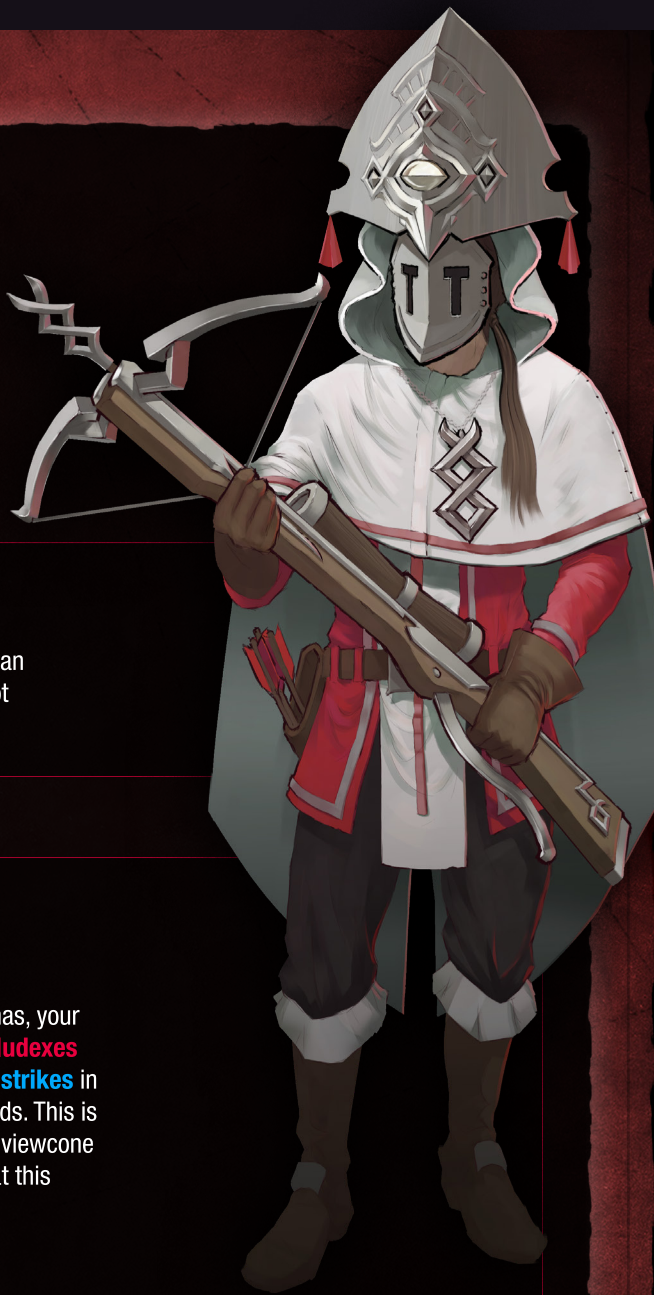
Like said, the Commissarius' major strength lies in their determination or stubbornness that makes them **static** and **hard to distract**. They will **withstand most distractions** that try to move them from position. Other **effects of distractions are also quite limited**. But as they **will come quickly after you** as soon as **anyting suspicious** happens, you are able to play with that and either **place yourself, traces of you and bodies visibly in their viewcone**. This will make these otherwise static guards move.



Always something to tell to an Acolyte



But also listen to someone higher ranked



IUDEX

Judge, jury and all-seeing executioner in the Inquisition military branch.

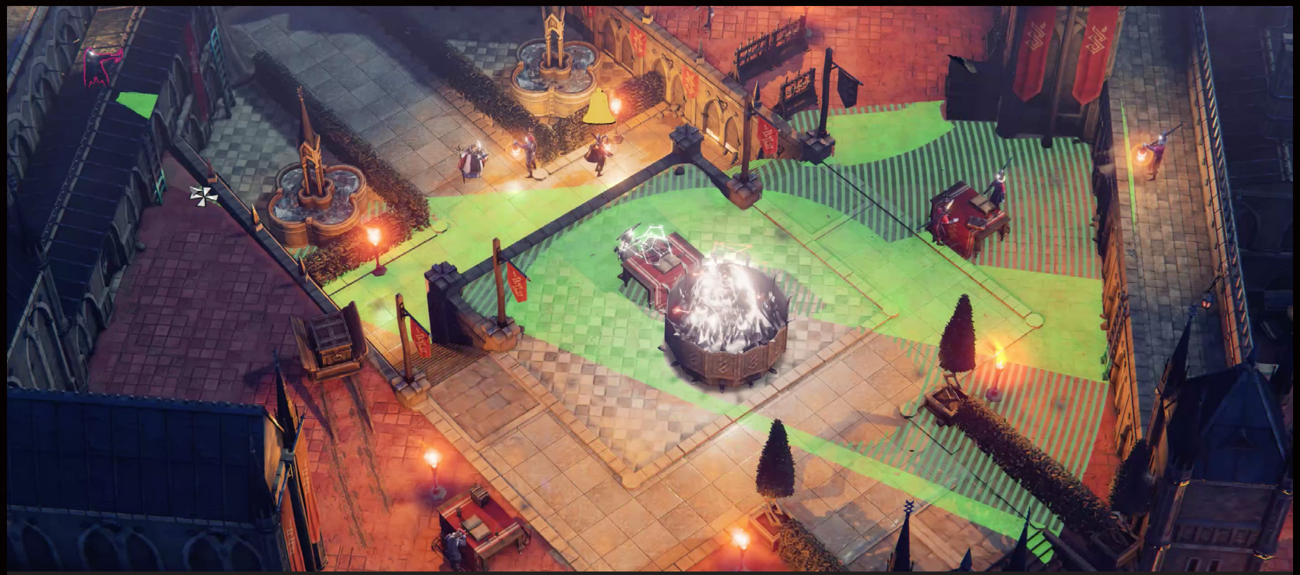
The Iudex is one with her weapon and only speaks the truth.
They are merciless judges who shun human connections.

Judging Eyesight

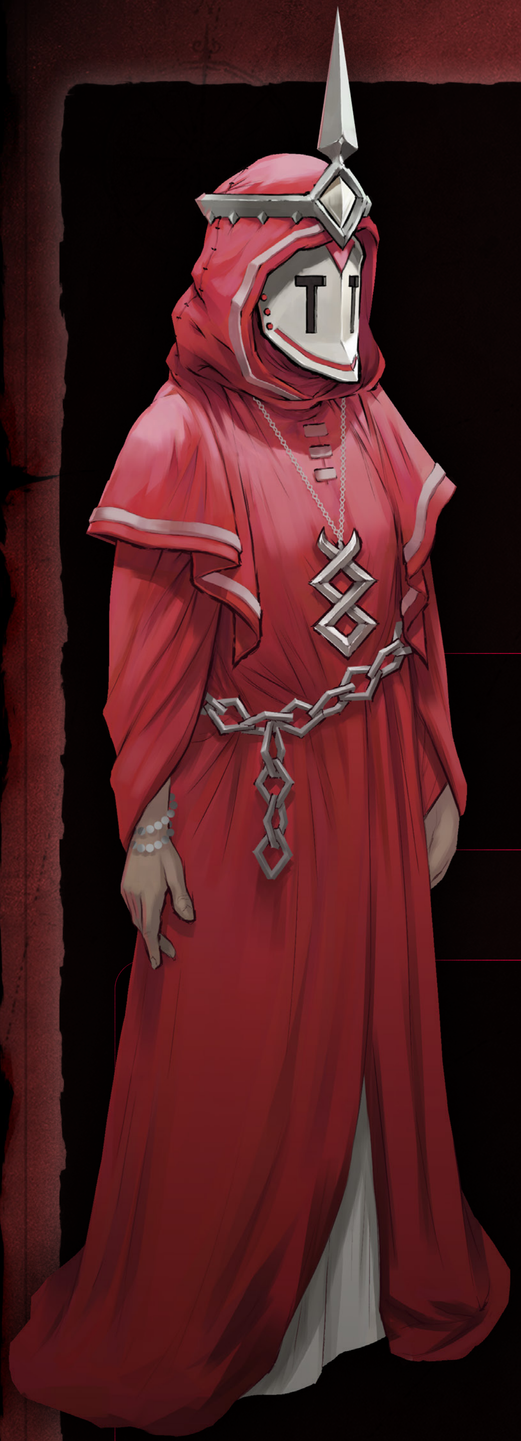
Can see the nature and corruption of human souls and also see much farther than a normal human thanks to her special mask. Her long range crossbow will shoot fiery crossbow bolts on those who stray from the Grand Design.

Common Strategies

Take the Iudex out as soon as you can. As they are usually towering above arenas, your own sharpshooter Teresa, once a Iudex herself, will be of high value here. But Iudexes are rarely alone. So be ready to **coordinate and synchronize the crew's fatal strikes** in **Shadow Mode** after climbing to some of the highest spots you find on the islands. This is where they are often positioned. End the reign of their unnaturally wide-ranged viewcone that is often more difficult to handle than those of six other guards. Just look at this nightly nightmare below...



A Iudex covering the whole courtyard at the fortresss that is Gran Alcazar



KINDRED

Intelligence agents for **Inquisitor Ignacia**. They always appear in pairs and share a psychic link with their partner.

Speak mostly in first person plural, except when referring to the person they are linked to, whom they call their “Other”. All thoughts are shared between them. As aware of their connected counterparts as they are of themselves. They simulate the connection to the **Maiden** by connecting themselves strongly to one another.

They are calm professionals that never forget anything. But they are also emotionally stunted.

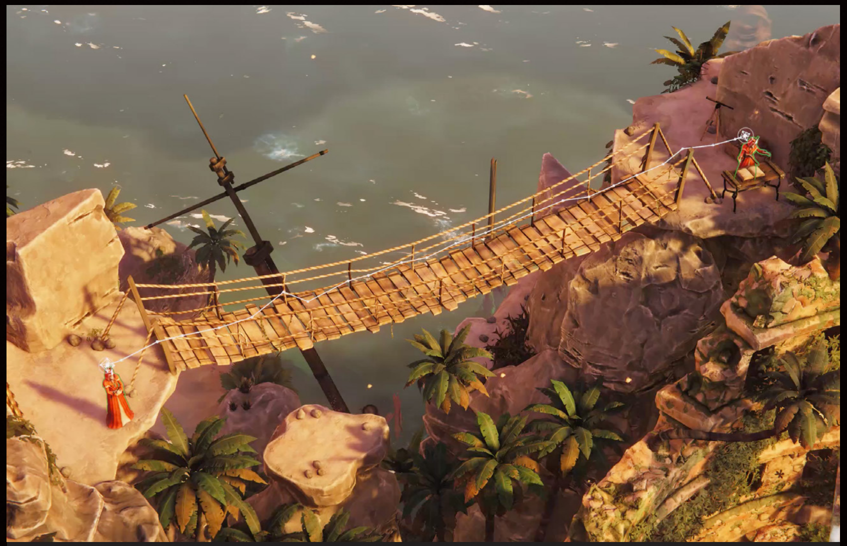
Psychic Link

A **Kindred** has always been linked with another **Kindred Sister**. They share their partner’s emotions and can sense if the other is being attacked.

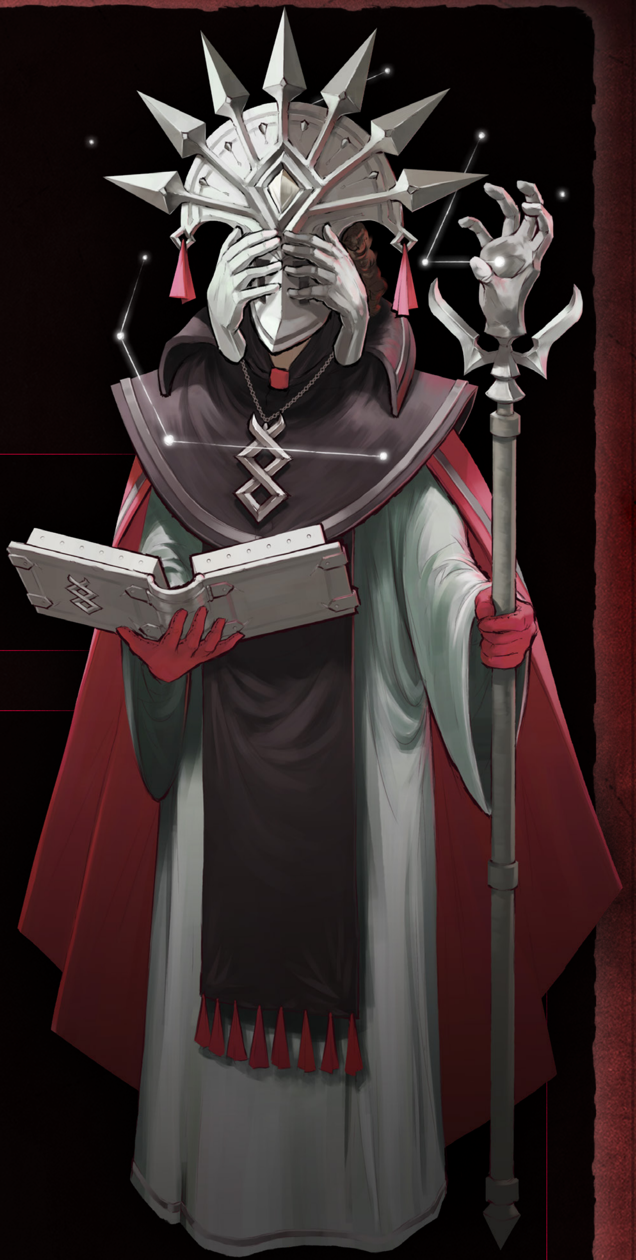
Common Strategies

There’s only one way to go with the Kindred as you can’t tackle them alone. **Coordinated teamplay executed in Shadow Mode** either in planning or pausing is certainly the best option to overcome them effectively.

One Kindred ...



Linked to her Kindred Sister



PROGNOSTICAR

High ranking figures of the religious strata of the **Inquisition** and of the few who survive long exposure to the flame. Basically the cream of the crop of religious fanaticism.

Prognosticars can peak into the future, which isn’t the only reason why they creep out even their peers.

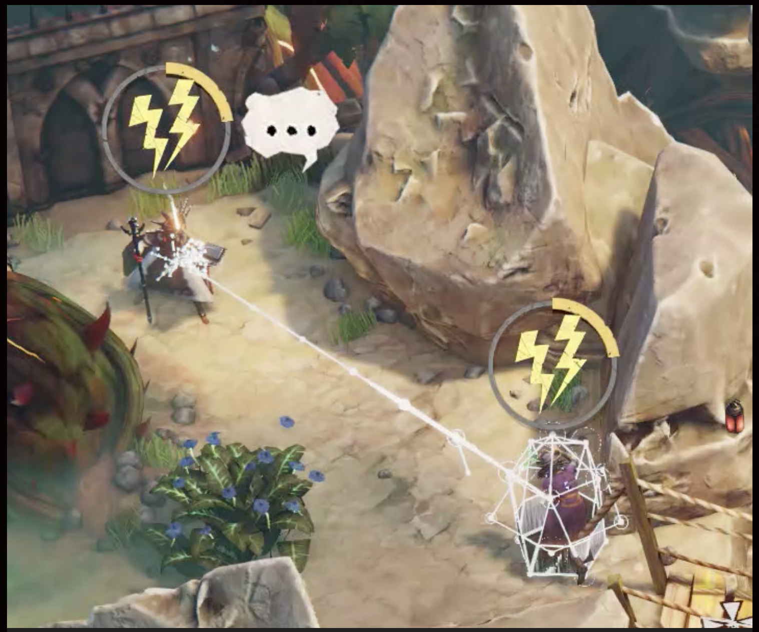
Hold & Drain Life

An extremely dangerous and cruel foe who uses his powers granted by the **Maiden’s Fire** to hold their opponents in place and slowly kill them.

Common Strategies

You usually feel that it’s better to avoid them at all cost. They are simply terrifying. But **once one of your crewmates** is **in the Prognosticar’s** time freezing **grasp**, you can **go for it and take him out** in the set window of opportunity signified by the timer.

Quite often and to your advantage, **Prognosticars** are already occupied with torturing some poor soul that is not in your crew. You find them with a fixed gaze and once all other guard have been taken care off, you have a shot.



Nastily caught by the Prognosticar

Prognosticar engaged in conversation

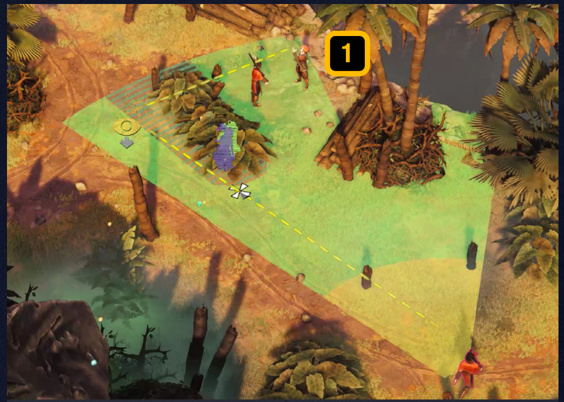
Essential Strategies

We've already been through the whole crew and every single skill now. And we also went through all the guards of the Inquisition and what skills they bring to the game. For mastering "Shadow Gambit - The Cursed Crew" you have to know how all of this combines and connects in all those setups of guards in the game, ranging from very minor groups of guards to big "arenas" populated with stationary and patrolling guards that seem impossible to get through at first glance with all their interlocked viewcones. It's often hard to wrap your head around these rather complex obstacles. And the beauty of it all is that, depending on how and from where you approach them, these setups will multiply in **possible solutions along the individual path you take**. The high degree of freedom very much defines the sandbox quality of the game and also the **nature of this guide**: There are *only* individual solutions which **makes any step-by-step walkthrough more or less meaningless**. Mastering some essential strategies will be even more meaningful then. Here we go...

Distract, Isolate & Reduce

Your goal with even the smallest setup of guards is to **reduce and "build" them back to (almost) zero**. The most effective strategies are all about the **gradual simplification of** setups, so that you can either **sneak your way through the area safely at some point** or completely **take out** each and every guard in these setups to great effect and satisfaction.

Setups can be as simple as in [1] with only two guards looking at each other, but this strategy will apply nonetheless. Sometimes their viewcones are moving, but quite often they will just stare at each other while talking, viewcones being static - at least for some time. In this case you could use a position mover distraction skill to get the Acolyte to some place out of the Commissarius' viewcone's reach. Then take him or her out. Or you can use synchronous action with two crewmates to get the job done. Which is a actually good idea here, as luring out the Acolyte will certainly make the Commissarius suspicious at some point.



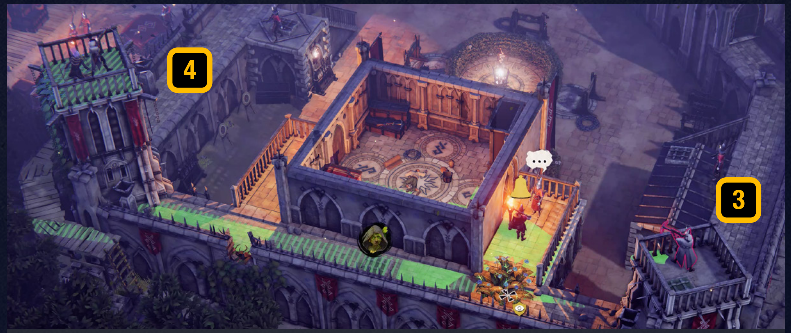
Simple setup on Morrow's Reach

In this particular example from the early mission "A Ship Needs a Crew" taking place on Morrow's Reach, there's also a third "player" in this still simple setup: patrolling guards like [2] will make you observe their path and routine for finding the right window of opportunity to deal with the binary setup eventually.

Take your time to distract guards, isolate **them,** take out **one** guard **after the other** if necessary, thus reducing the whole setup. You better **not start right in the middle** of a setup. Even if you are able to lure out some Acolyte, there's often the notorious guard watching from the back row.

It's a good piece of advise to always deal with such guards in the back first and work your way through to the center of a setup. Watch out for ladders and ivies to get to higher grounds where guards overlooking the area and arena are usually placed - an Acolyte, Commissarius and the "worst" of them all: some Iudex on a watchtower like in [3] and [4] with their long-ranged viewcones and crossbows ready to take you out.

Once you've reached the core of a setup, you can even shoot your way out with Flintlock Pistols, cause enjoyable mayhem with all remaining guards in alarm states.



Two Iudex guarding the whole area of this fortification

Distract a Lot

We've already covered the importance of distraction skills, but in the context of "distract, isolate and reduce" this importance becomes evident. You can easily **pick the** distraction skills **you prefer from the** skillbook **first, which then automatically determines the** crewmates **for your mission**. Decision made for you. But that would be too easy a thing as you still have to balance this decision out with your preferences for all the other amazing skills that aren't for distraction.

Even with the recommendation to take at least one "Position Changer" on mission, you won't even have to go for more than one with all the powerful distraction skills. You are frequently just fine with redirecting the viewcone of guards that aren't watched by others and take them out in the set time window, or simply sneak by them. Some highly skilled players get really far by just perfecting timings for using the more simple, quick distractions. We've seen truly amazing and inventive stuff over the years with people playing our stealth strategy games. This encouraged us to put even more emphasis on the sandbox aspects.

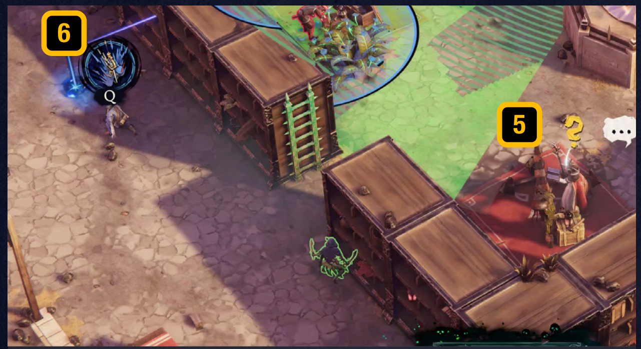
With all the power of distraction at hand, be reminded though that these skills **will have different effects on the different types of** Inquisition guards as already described.

Hide yer traces… or not

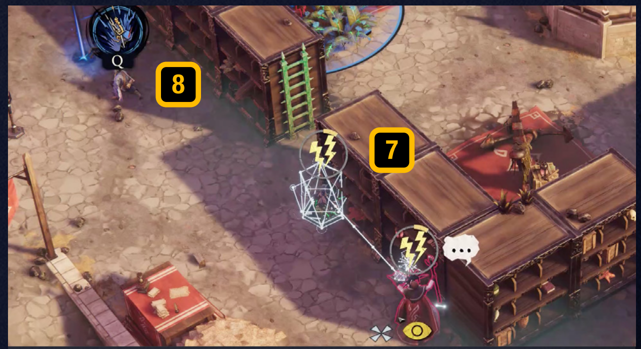
"Reducing" setups doesn't mean killing and leaving the mess. It includes cleaning up the mess, hide those guards lying around. Or at least know exactly what you're up to when leaving them lying around as they can also be quite useful just where they are.

In general, hide bodies well in bushes, throw them in the water or behind closed doors of shacks and buildings. You certainly know the drill already. Use Suleidy's "Cover Seeds" to hide bodies almost instantly and from afar. Or take Quentin on mission, who is able to dispose of bodies from afar with his Treasure Rod and chest on his back. It can become a nuisance, if you already moved on, only to find out that patroling guards just discovered what happened with bodies all over the place. Or an alarm getting even worse faster. Again, this is part of the game and also fun at times. But **cleaning up means taking care** and **gaining control over situations and your progress on missions**.

That being said, you can also use the bodies lying around for very powerful but risky distractions - and thus well to your advantage. Especially all those types of guards **that won't respondwell to your** normal distraction skills **will investigate any suspicious activities** including bodies lying around. Even the "lazy" Commissarius will walk then. Take this into account for the whole spectrum of position changing skills.
At times this even comes to your advantage by accident. It can be quite a beautiful surprise when a Commissarius or even a Prognosticar break their routine, walking into spots they normally wouldn't. Only to find themselves in an **ambush you quickly set up**. For the Prognosticar seen in [5] we unintentionally made him leave his "comfort zone" due to a missing Acolyte. Eventually, spotting Suleidy got her frozen in time [7] after the Prognosticar either saw her directly or spotted the body that Pinkus left behind at [6] after using Peruse Mind before that. Toya [8] then had great opportunity to take out the Prognosticar. This all could have worked diffferently depending on the route of the Prognosticar investigating. What followed then would have been way more difficult with the Prognosticar still on patrol for sure.

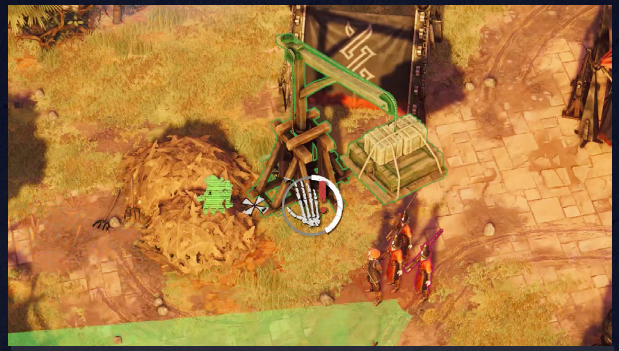


Accidentally preparing an ambush for a Prognosticar



Time for Toya to act

Use And Explore the Environment



Support the environmental support

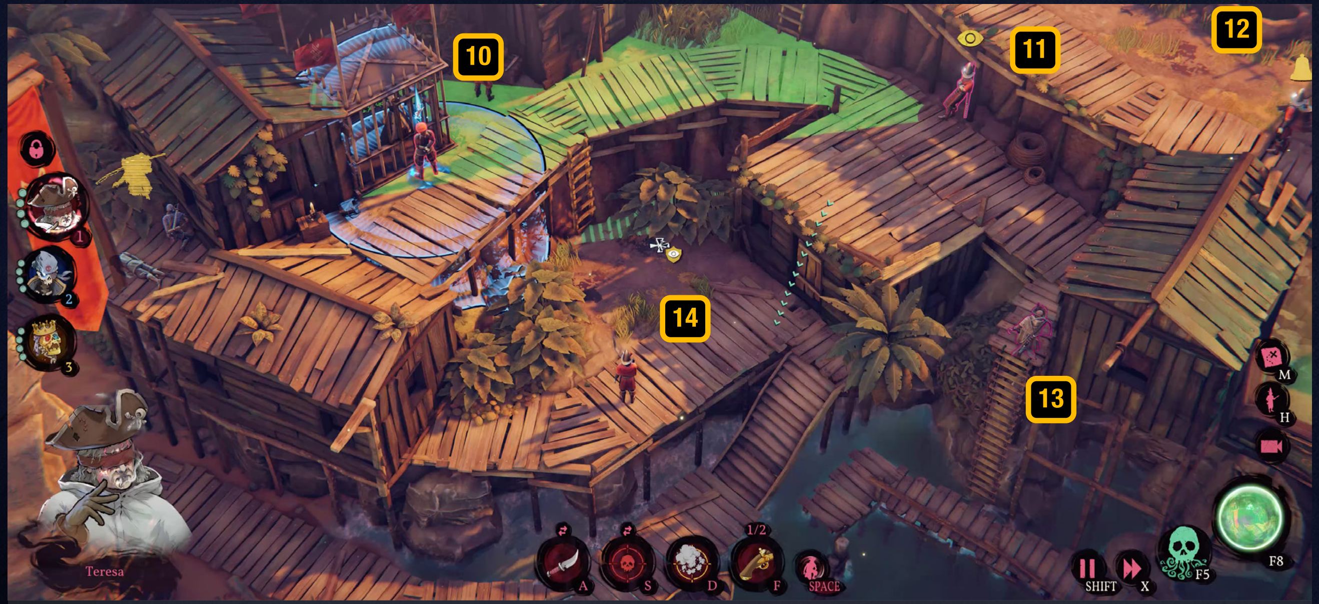
You naturally use the **environment for hiding a lot**. It's at the core of the game. So you permanently watch out for **hiding spots** like **bushes** or **buildings**, staying behind corners or huge obstacles that block the viewcones of **guards**. That's how you play and prepare your strategy with all the attention to viewcones.

But the environment also helps with **objects that you can interact with**. These can be easily missed, so pay close attention to all that might help you in getting rid of **patrols** or **whole groups of guards** that either stand or walk right under **towering rocks and hanging crates like in [9]**. **Push or trigger these at the right time** and things become much easier.

In general and especially if you feel stuck with a setup or arena, check the environment closely for **alternative routes**. Anything you might have missed. Hit the **button for highlighting environmental objects** like **bushes**, **ivies**, **ladders** , if you need to. Helps you see and discover.

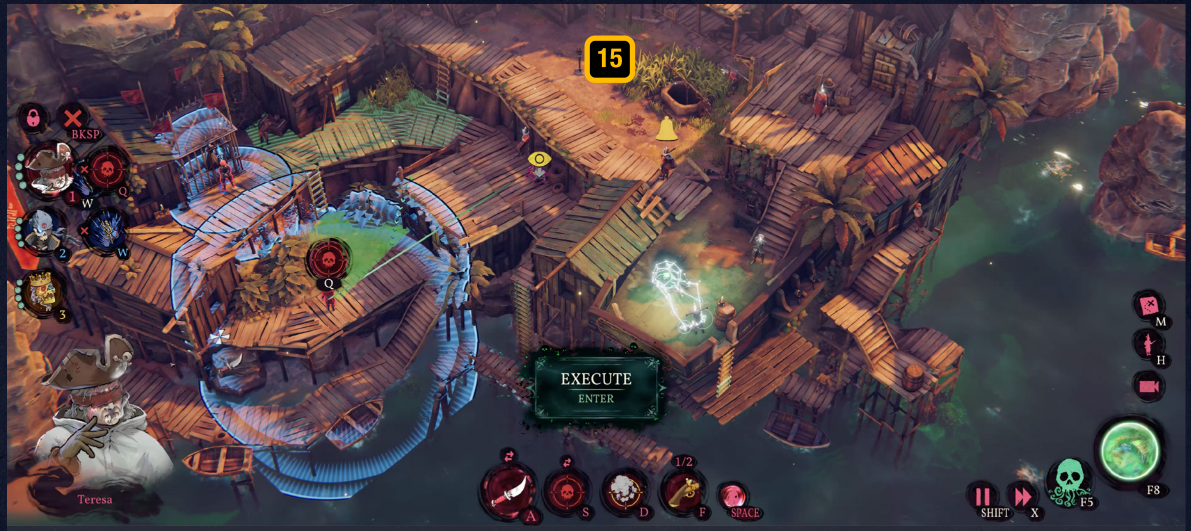
There's *never* one way into a **setup or arena filled with guards**. Start observing right at the **core of a setup** or any point of interest. Could be your mission objective or just a pair of **Acolytes** blocking passage with their interlocked vierwcones.

Draw a **circle in your mind around the crucial spot [10]** in this example from the mission **“Graveyard Hunt”** taking place on **Angler's Grave**. You have to free and talk to imprisoned **Yolanda**. The noise radius of **Toya's Shadow Step and Katashiro combo** at **[10]** helps in this case. Then **gradually extend the radius of that circle for finding more options and leverage for your strategy**. If you've reached those **guards that stand in the back**, like **[11]** overlooking the area or the **patrolling Acolyte carrying an Alarm Bell [12]**, you usually find entry points right there or close by, a bit farther behind them. In this example, **Teresa** gets to **[11]** with the **ladder [13]**, waiting for that moment to strike as soon as the **patrolling Acolyte [12]** is not looking. The **Acolyte [14]** might still be able to see what's happening, but depending on the set difficulty (we come to this later), the window of opportunity is either just right for you to succeed, or **another crewmate** might have to cover that particular **guard**.



Finding a way, finding *your* way

What comes across as easy at first sight can still become **more complicated when looking further and increasing the radius of the area under inspection**. Zoom out further. What you see in the **area of [15]** could simply be the **next setup or arena**. But it could also mean **more guards** **and their viewcones crossing your plans** as well. Be ready to **adjust and adapt your strategy accordingly**.



Look at all those guards and ladders in the back!

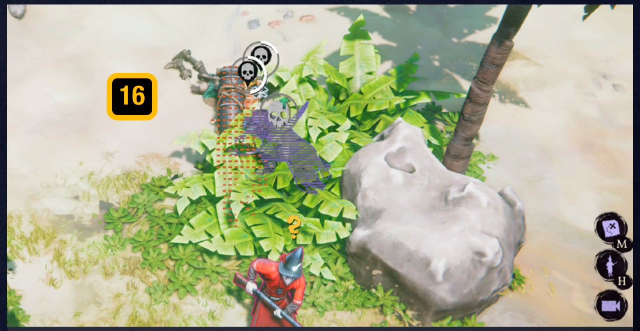
If you find any **passage** that is **tightly blocked by guards' viewcones**, go through all the **skills** that might help you to get to places: **Suleidy's Cover Seeds** are always a great way for getting closer while hiding. **Afia's Blink** enables her to **teleport to a different spot all while staying undetected**. **Toya** can use **patrols** that he marked with his **Katashiro** to get across using **Shadow Step**. Even able to **instantly get back to his former position** by using **Shadow Swap**, if you decided to upgrade his signature skill. **Gaëlle** can easily **shoot crewmates across** with her **Kanol**. Only a few examples and ideas. Use all that you have.

Time and Again - Try and Retry

Consider any move to take out **guards** with **combat skills** as a kind of **final check that answers the question whether you've done enough or were simply too impatient**, only to be detected by **guards** you didn't care about or didn't even see at first. Then you either **retry by rewinding the clock** with the **Red Marley's time controlling abilities**, i.e. quickly load a savegame. Or you just deal with the situation you've unleashed, handling alarms and **guards** coming after you. This might just evoke situations that help you move on. Start playing with this. It can be tremendous fun to explore the limits of how much chaos you are able to handle.

To support this, we have also put more flexibility in the game now with **“Shadow Gambit - The Cursed Crew”** when dealing with such situations. You can even **revive your killed undead crewmates** on the field now, making death not the final frontier. Play with the dead in **[16]** and bring them back into the game. There's however a timer for reviving **crewmates** that gets worse in sequence, meaning that you can't play with the dead undead as you might wish.

Watching your plans not working out is an essential part of the fun. Don't worry. You are not playing it wrong. You are fine and will succeed with some instances of retry for sure.



Two dead in the bushes ready to be revived

Single Force & Teamplay

”Distract, isolate and reduce” will work with the **skillset** of a **single character of the Cursed Crew** alone. This can feel powerful like nothing else happening across **The Timeless Shores**. Playing a single character like **Afia** with her **Blink ability** often won’t need any help from other **crewmates**. Distract and act fast. And those **members of the crew** with **abilities to lure guards** are prepared even better for acting on their own. Split up **the crew**, enjoy the “single force” and see how far you come being single. **Reinforcements from the crew** are a certain bet in your usual group of three on mission.

For any situation or setup where you have to **take out more than one guard at once**, **teamplay** will become essential however. There are no bombs in the game, no skills with a particular area of effect that would harm multiple **forces of the Inquisition** at once. Any such thing needs **teamplay** where you have to **plan, coordinate and orchestrate your strikes and combinations of distractions and combat moves** across **several crewmates** in order to succeed. **The Cursed Crew will be the bomb you set up!**

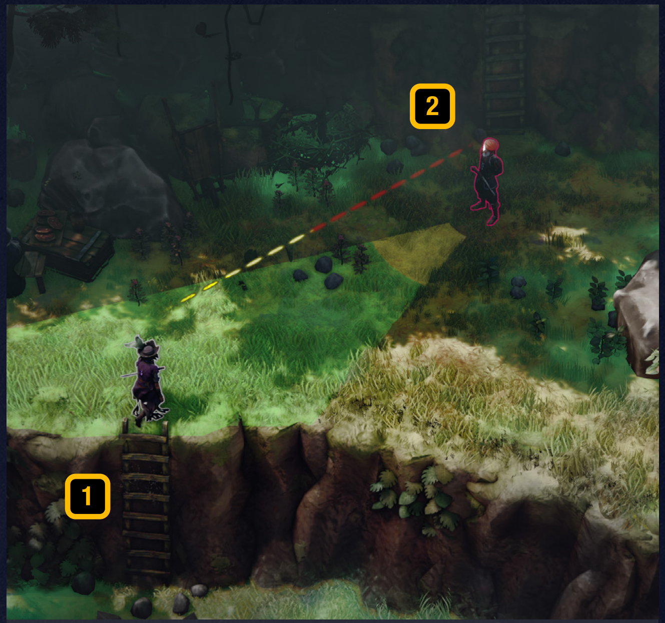
We have designed the **characters** and their **skillsets** for different playstyles and experimentation but balanced all in a way that no **character** comes out as being more powerful than the other. However, with **spectacular, magical skills** we wanted to unlock true potential and not become boring eventually by evening it all out. This meant that **more powerful skills always come with a kind of trade-off**, a kind of **inability for a single character** that can be **balanced out by a strength of another character** you set for support. This defines teamplay across the crew in **“Shadow Gambit- The Cursed Crew”**.

With **Shadow Mode** you have an essential support tool for that **orchestration and execution of actions across the Cursed Crew** without having to train for **extreme motoric player skills** and the use of shortcuts with mouse and keyboard. **Shadow Mode** is your **planning mode and your tool for building the bomb with The Cursed Crew.**

In the blink of an eye

Take a Pause

Activate Shadow Mode and the game will pause. The power of the pause can be overshadowed by Shadow Mode’s true potential that lies in **synchronizing actions across your crew, enabling them to take parallel action**. But just take the pause for itself as an **essential part of your overall skill repertoire**. Using the pause excessively surely changes the flow and even tone of the game quite a bit, but also works like magic as soon as “**real-time action” gets out of control and you want to regain control over situations**.



See this, hit pause, think

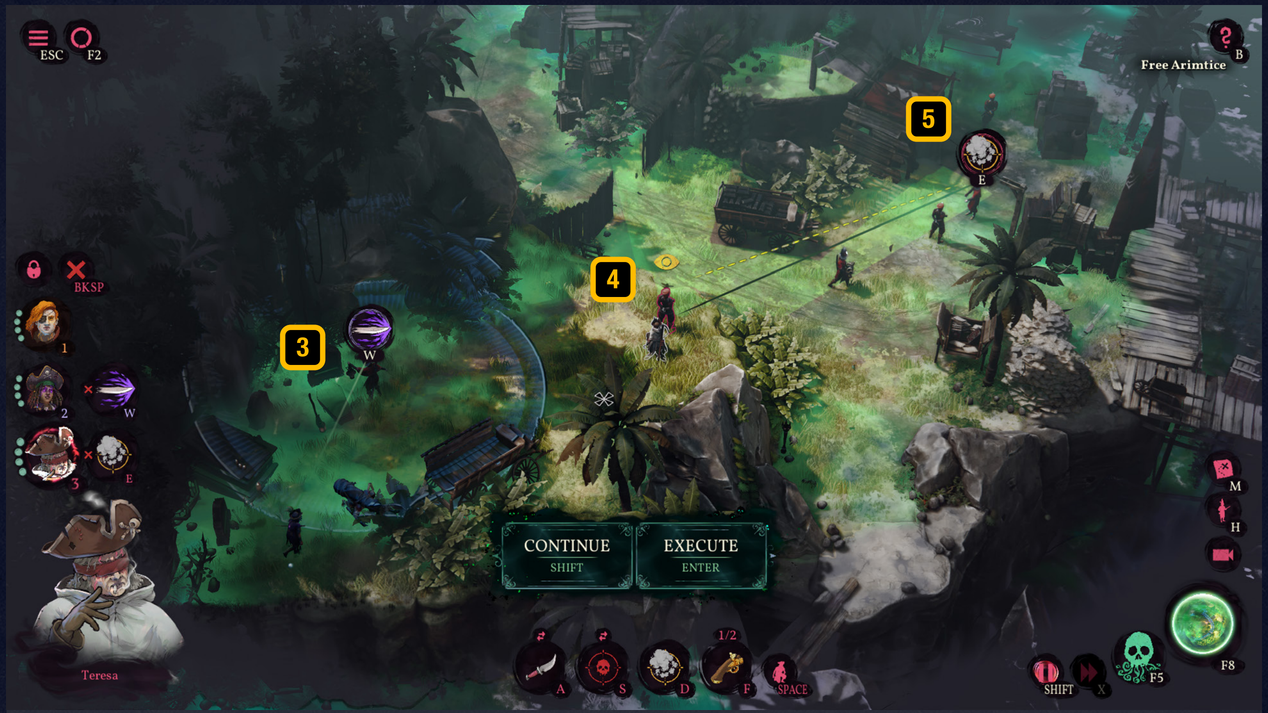
If you climb up a **ladder [1]** just to be surprised by a **Commissarius [2]**, **pause the game.** It allows you to calmly plan your **crewmate’s next** action. In this case with **Afia**, select her **Blink skill** to quickly **dash to the Commissarius [2] and take this one out**.
Or you take **all the time you need** to inspect the **surroundings** first while on pause. Check whether there’s **another guard** watching. If this is the case with a single **Acolyte** than you **select Time Freeze** first, **unpause the game** and roll out the command. Or execute the **Time Freeze** you’ve set on the **guard** watching in **Shadow “Planning” Mode**. After that, you immediately pause the game again to plan further and go back to the idea of **taking down the Commissarius [2] with Blink**.

The **pause allows you to act incredibly fast**, even if it sounds paradoxical. Use the pause in situations where critical timings are key. When **guards** are agitated, when the **cooldowns of your skills** become a problem and every second counts. Getting the hang and flow of playing with the pause also prepares you well for using **Shadow Mode for teamplay**...

Synchronizing Team Actions & Executing Teamplay in Shadow Mode

Of course, **Shadow Mode’s** true potential lies in **teamplay**. It allows you to set **one single action per crewmate onto a guard, store them, and execute all planned actions with a single button.** Either directly while you are still paused in **Shadow Mode** or any time afterwards. You can combine it with any manual action. For example, you could only set actions for those **crewmates** in **support with distractions** or you let **two crewmates** take out two **guards** at once while you control further action with a **third crewmate** “manually”.

How did it all play out after the **Commissarius [2]** on that plateau? Well, there was actually no other **guard** in the back, but another **ladder up to higher grounds** with **two Acolytes, one patrolling** in the **area [3]**. And yet another **Commissarius [4]** that turned his back on us. **Afia** dealt with the **patrolling Acolyte** in no time. Then we set **Blink** on the other in **Shadow Mode**. Not quite necessary as this **guard** turned her back on us and wasn’t watched by any other **guard**. But still. **Teresa** on the other hand was set on **taking out** the **Commissarius [4] with a melee attack**. But as this **Commissarius** was watched by **some Acolyte guard on lower grounds [5]** - too far away to reach and watched by yet **another Commissarius** - we decided to **blind the one at [5] with Ashen Judgement** instead of **Iron Judgement**, which just would have raised alarm. So we set **Ashen Judgement** on the **Acolyte** at **[5]** in **Shadow mode**, executed the two actions, immediately paused the game again for manually selecting **Teresa’s melee attack, taking the Commissarius [4] out** within the timeframe given by **Ashen Judgement’s** effect duration. It all worked better than the description of it you’ve just read.

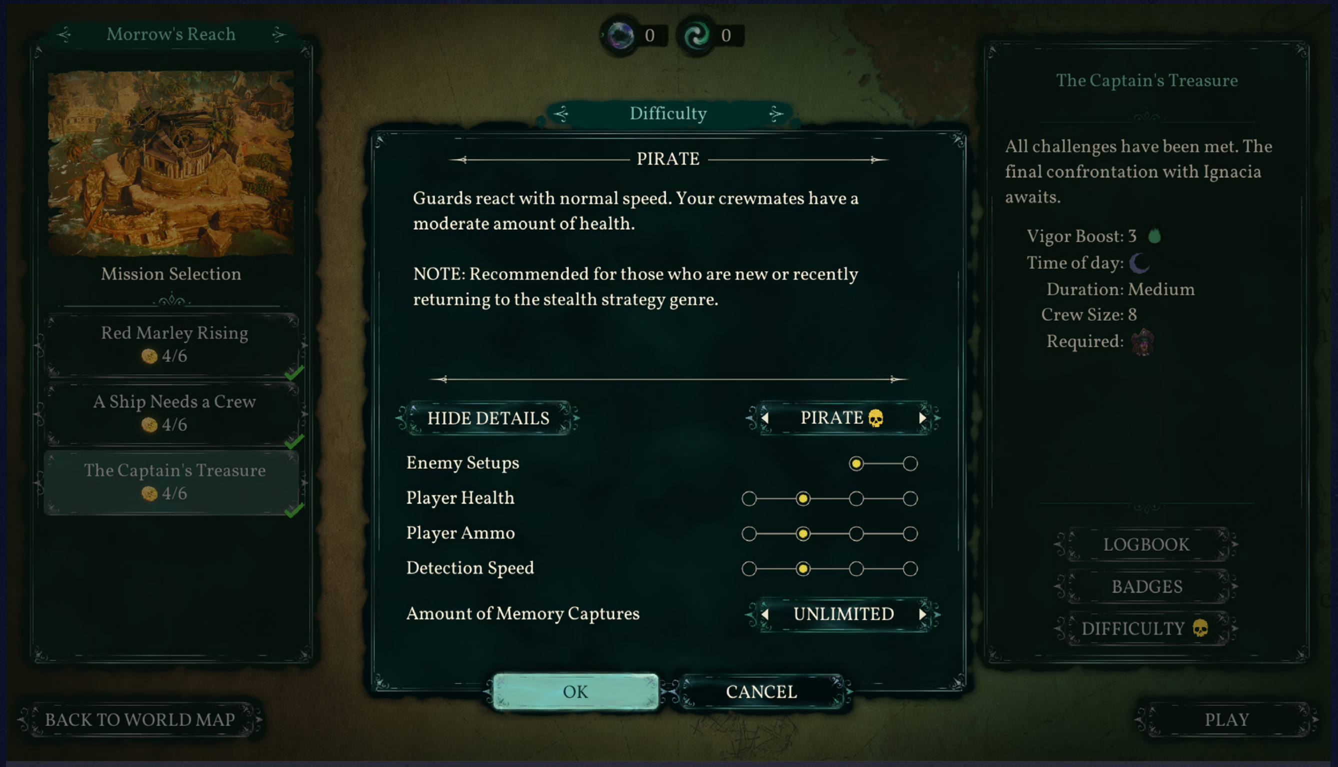


A simple use case study for Shadow Mode teamplay

You will encounter far more complex situations throughout the game, in which using **Shadow Mode** for synchronizing actions across **crewmates’ abilities** is far more demanding, time-critical and eventually much more interesting. Minor Spoilers: Ever set up a plan in **Shadow Mode** with **eight characters for eight opponents of the highest order? Only to do it yet again in sequence with other skills including Flintlock pistols**? Wait and see - either in this guide or when playing the game. But this rather simple example here, taken from **Gaelle’s third “Captain’s Test” mission** on **New Krucbury isle** is already telling the whole story. It illustrates the **step by step thinking and planning** behind the strategy of **distract, isolate and reduce** and how to **use Shadow Mode for pausing and executing your plans**.

Difficulty Options

"Shadow Gambit - The Cursed Crew" can be a **difficult game at times**. Lower difficulty can make exploration easier and much more enjoyable. Could be an option for a first playthrough. But you won't have to decide on difficulty for a whole playthrough, only because you've been asked to choose one as soon as you begin a new game. **Adjust difficulty right before each and every mission in the game**. Play them on higher difficulties later, if you want. All missions will be available for replay once you've finished the storyline.



PIRATE

Guards react with normal speed. Your crewmates have a moderate amount of health.

NOTE: Recommended for those who are new or recently returning to the stealth strategy genre.

Enemy Setups ●—○
Player Health ○—●—○—○
Player Ammo ○—●—○—○
Detection Speed ○—●—○—○
Amount of Memory Captures UNLIMITED

The Captain's Treasure

All challenges have been met. The final confrontation with Ignacia awaits.

Vigor Boost: 3
Time of day:
Duration: Medium
Crew Size: 8
Required:

Select your difficulty preference before each mission

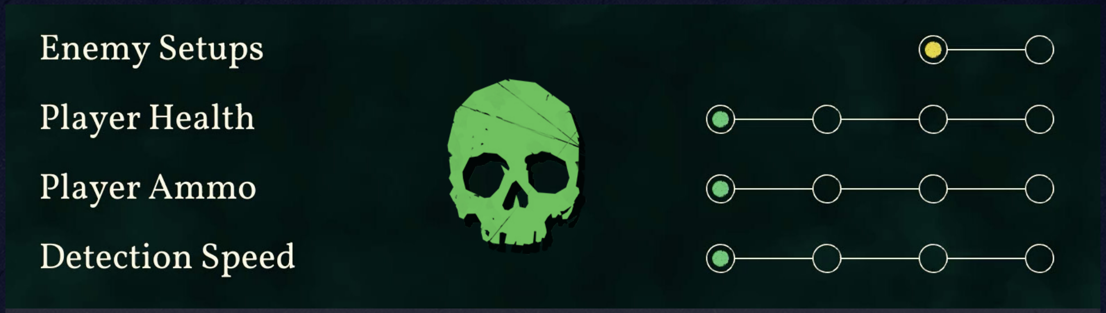
There are **four presets for difficulty**: **Explorer**, **Pirate**, **Legend** and **Cursed**. You can see how these are set to the right. And here is what you can adjust:

Enemy Setups: This determines the number of **guards** and the frequency of **tougher guard types**. Setting this to high will definitely change the game for you and make it more difficult to get through diverse setups. Remember that less **Acolytes** means less leverage for **moving the positions of guards**.

Player Health: This determines the maximum **number of health points** your **crewmembers** can have. It might have less of an impact for you, in case you aim at playing "perfectly" without being detected anyway and prefer a frequent reload of a captured memory. If you like getting through the chaos you've put on the map a lot, then this is when **health points** will matter. Go for this option by lowering it on the scale.

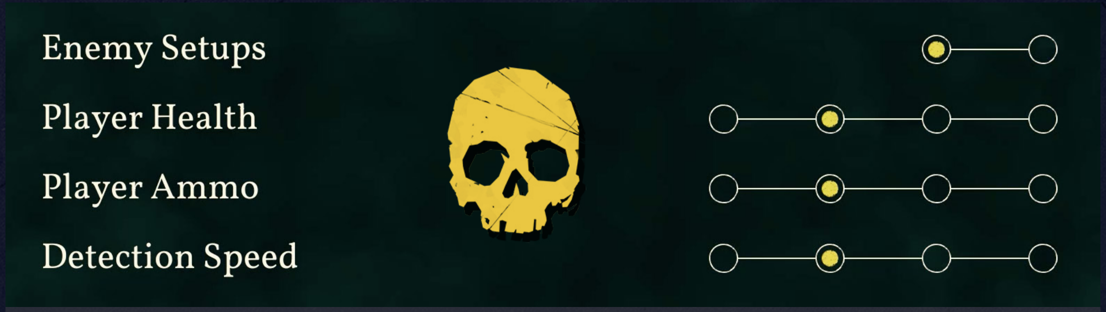
Player Ammo: This determines **how much ammunition** your **crewmates** have at the start of a mission, as well as the **amount of ammo** found in **crates**. Change this to allow for more or less **gunplay** in your playthrough. Won't matter too much again if you focus on stealth gameplay and not shooting your way out of tight situations that also involve alarm states with **many guards** running around already. But it can be quite fun to occasionally consider using your old **Flintlock Pistols**.

Detection Speed: This determines the speed at which a **guard** will detect your **crewmates** when they can see you. It's a global modifier that changes the game a lot, in case you are a frequent runner through viewcones that have already grown dangerously yellow. Cranking this up will then change gameplay considerably for this playstyle and the demands on your reflexes.



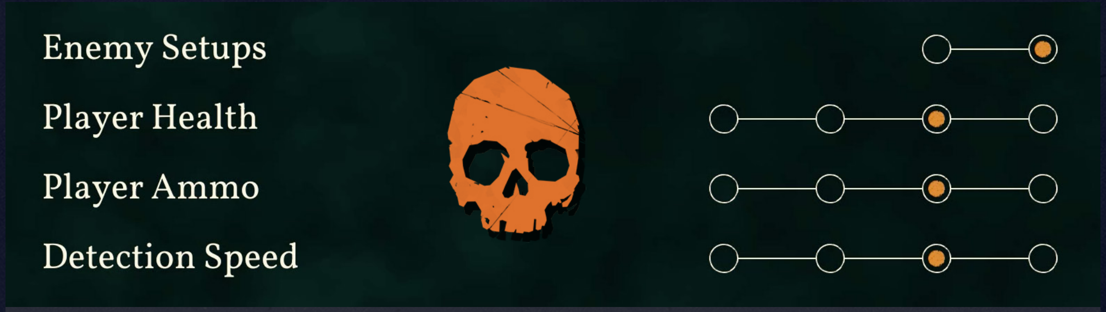
Enemy Setups ●—○
Player Health ●—○—○—○
Player Ammo ●—○—○—○
Detection Speed ●—○—○—○

"Explorer" difficulty presets - easy mode



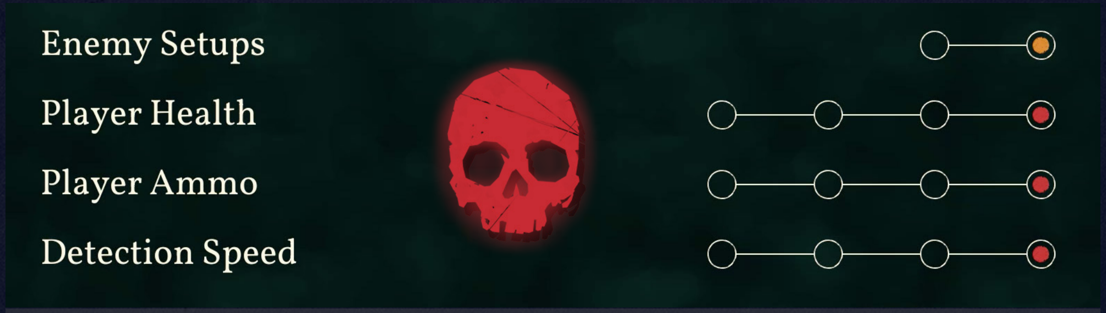
Enemy Setups ●—○
Player Health ○—●—○—○
Player Ammo ○—●—○—○
Detection Speed ○—●—○—○

"Pirate" difficulty presets - normal mode



Enemy Setups ○—●
Player Health ○—○—●—○
Player Ammo ○—○—●—○
Detection Speed ○—○—●—○

"Legend" difficulty presets - hard mode



Enemy Setups ○—●
Player Health ○—○—○—●
Player Ammo ○—○—○—●
Detection Speed ○—○—○—●

"Cursed" difficulty presets - hardcore mode

Amount of Memory Captures: This determines the number of times you can capture a memory. It is a special case considering difficulty however. We offer this to all those players that are in for the ultimate thrill and also willing to lose a lot of progress on their mission for that very thrill. **Only recommended for absolute hardcore players that are insanely confident and like a taste of permadeath**. Arrrrrrrrrr.

Islands & Missions

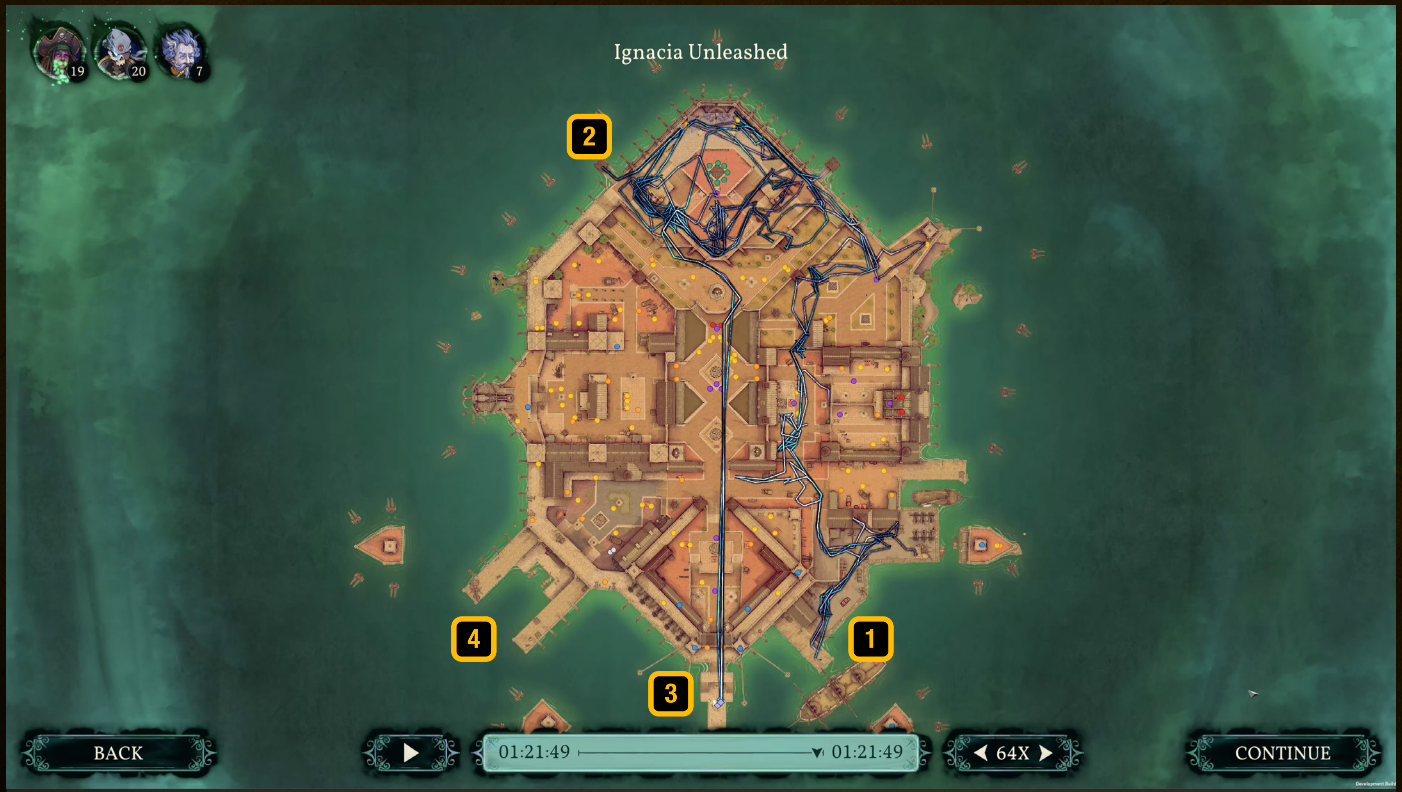
“Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew” provides players with **more freedom than our previous entries in the stealth strategy genre.** With some exceptions for plot reasons, you are able to **freely choose which mission to tackle** and **which respective island of the Timeless Shores you set foot on next**. That is once you have discovered, i.e. unlocked them **on the map** first. Each **island** itself is then a **unique, hand-crafted sandbox** where you can choose **different entry and exit points**. Watch the **pre-mission briefings** and fly across the **islands for reconnaissance,** inspect the **environments** and the **setups of Inquisition guards** you find there.

The **route you take on a mission across an island will alter and “personalize” any of these setups depending from where you approach them, which skills you combine for solo play and teamplay** in order to get through them successfully. With that in mind, you choose your **landing point** according to your first plan and only then **decide on who you want to take with you from the Cursed Crew**. For this, your options will also depend on the very sequence of **crewmates** you’ve revived on the **Marley’s deck** at that point.

All of this together offers quite the bandwidth of options and possibilities. And the individual route you take won’t always be an instant path to glory.

In this particular example from the mission **“Ignacia Unleashed”**, taking place on **Gran Alcázar** mid-game, the player had a great start at **landing spot [1]** - there would have been another one near **[4]** - but naturally had to put in much more effort at the **very north of the fortress [2]** with the mission’s climax. You can tell by just looking at the sheer **density of paths recorded for the mission map end screen up there**. And this screen only accounts for the paths that eventually led to successfully ending the mission, running to the **Tear in the Below at [3]** in a straight path, making the exit. The actual playtime had taken roughly an hour longer and many paths will only be remembered by the player himself. If asked he would confess to you that he’s learned a lot from getting rather punished for being impatient with the **incredibly tight setup at [2]**. No shortcuts to success had been found. He tried intensely though.

Like in this example, you will carve **your own path** through the game, **define** and refine your own **playstyle on the way**, find your **own unique solution**. We love and embrace this and want you to feel the same! In this light and context it is apparent that **any linear, “one-dimensional” mission walkthrough would simply stand against how we want you to enjoy the game**. So we put this guide very much in line with that: Provide you with best possible guidance and strategies for **playing and mastering the game first** with **Part One**. The rest will follow almost automatically, with a little help and guidance still added in **Part Two** about **“Islands & Missions”**.



Straight to the exit south after some difficulties in the north

And this is **what we will do for the rest of the guide** in **Part Two** that follows now: We **put the “map on the map”**, introduce you to the **islands and the missions** you will encounter on them. We merely guide you with **ideas and inspiration** on how to **tackle those setups**, that are perhaps a bit more difficult to come by. We shine a light on **mission highlights designed for climax** in a rather “rough” mission walkthrough that won’t mess with any freedom you have with character selection, personal playstyle and paths you take.

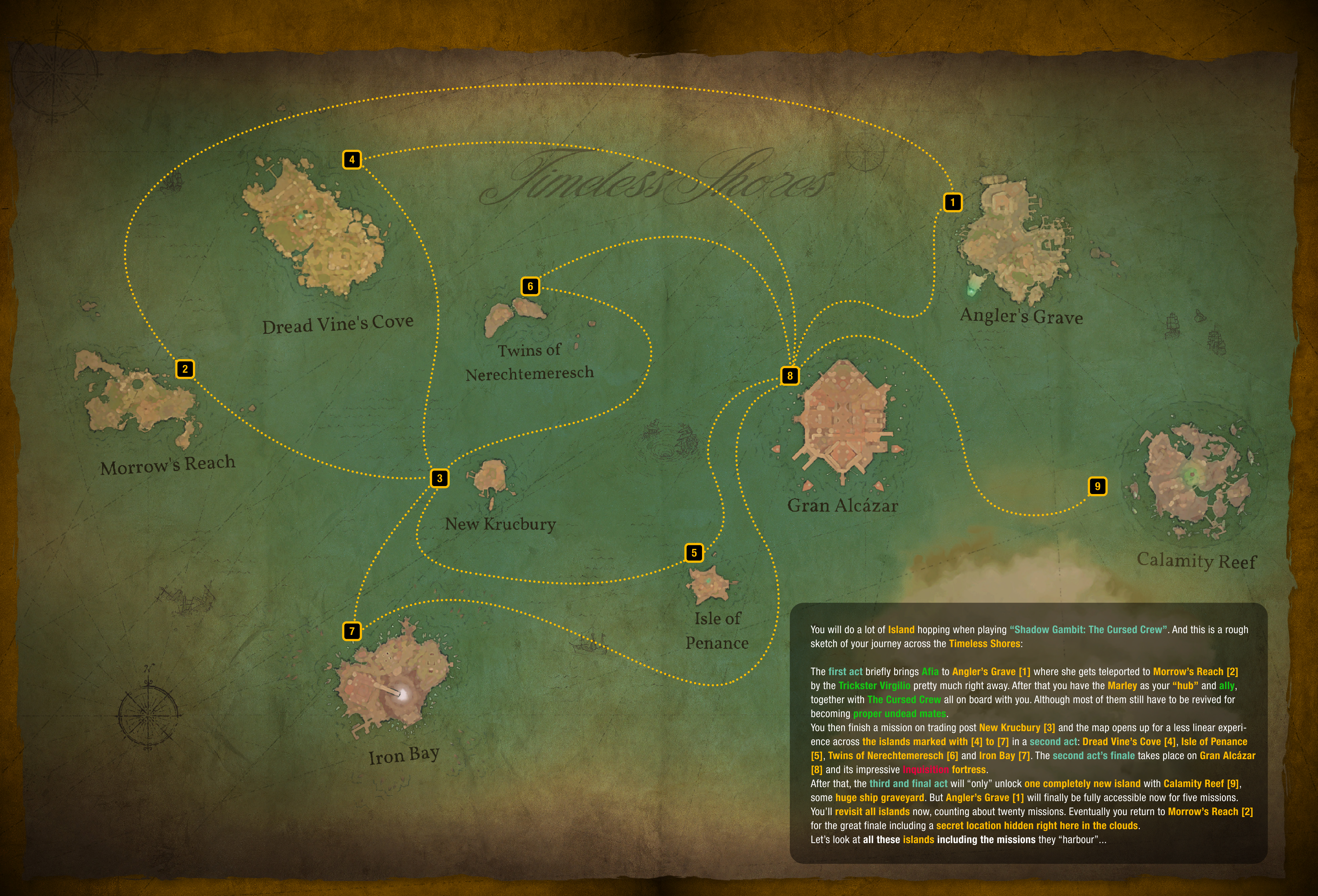
We start off with a **map of the Timeless Shores** followed by portraits of **each island** you explore on your journey. These portraits include some brief overview of all the missions you find on a **particular island**. Most of these missions are marked with an icon telling you about the type of mission: **Black Pearl, Soul Energy** or **“Character”**. Here’s how these contribute to your overall progression through the game:

Marked with **Black Pearls** and **Soul Energy icons** are all those **missions that need to be completed in order to revive all seven original members of the Cursed Crew** eventually. The **first crewmate Afia is “free”** but not part of the original crew (see chapter **“Reviving the Cursed Crew”**). The Marley has **2 Black Pearls** and **1 Soul Energy** for you in stock when you rescue her. You then play **three missions for Black Pearls and four for Soul Energy over the course of the game’s first and second act. Completing these missions** let’s you **solve the Captain’s Riddle with reviving the “Five of Marley’s Crew”**. We do the math again: **Eight playable characters** in the game including **Afia**. **Seven characters of the crew** you can unlock altogether for the whole game. **Five crewmates for solving the Captain’s Riddle**. **Two more** to revive in the third and final act, after finishing the four remaining **Black Pearl** and **Soul Energy** missions taking place on **Angler’s Grave** and **Calamity Reef**. Note that **relics** collected on mission contain **Soul Energy** that the **Marley** will drain from them when back on the **ship** after a mission. So, **relics** mean **Soul Energy**.

Once you’ve solved the **Captain’s riddle** in the second act and get to the third act, the **“Captain’s Test” questlines for all those characters** will unlock that you’ve already revived at this point. These are accessible through a magical mirror you find at the **stern on Marley’s deck**. Each **questline** includes between one and three **chapters, i.e. missions** taking place **on different islands**. You have to **finish four of these “character quests”** in order to **unlock the grand finale** that begins on **Morrow’s Reach**. You can still play the remaining three questlines after finishing the game. Don’t worry.

Missions that don’t show any icon are **clean “plot missions”** with **no resource** to be gained.

Let’s look at the map …


Timeless Shores
4
1
Dread Vine's Cove
6
Twins of Nerechtemeresch
Angler's Grave
2
8
Morrow's Reach
3
New Krucbury
Gran Alcázar
9
Calamity Reef
5
7
Isle of Penance
Iron Bay

You will do a lot of **Island** hopping when playing **“Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew”**. And this is a rough sketch of your journey across the **Timeless Shores**:

The **first act** briefly brings **Afia** to **Angler’s Grave [1]** where she gets teleported to **Morrow’s Reach [2]** by the **Trickster Virgilio** pretty much right away. After that you have the **Marley** as your **“hub”** and **ally**, together with **The Cursed Crew** all on board with you. Although most of them still have to be revived for becoming **proper undead mates**.

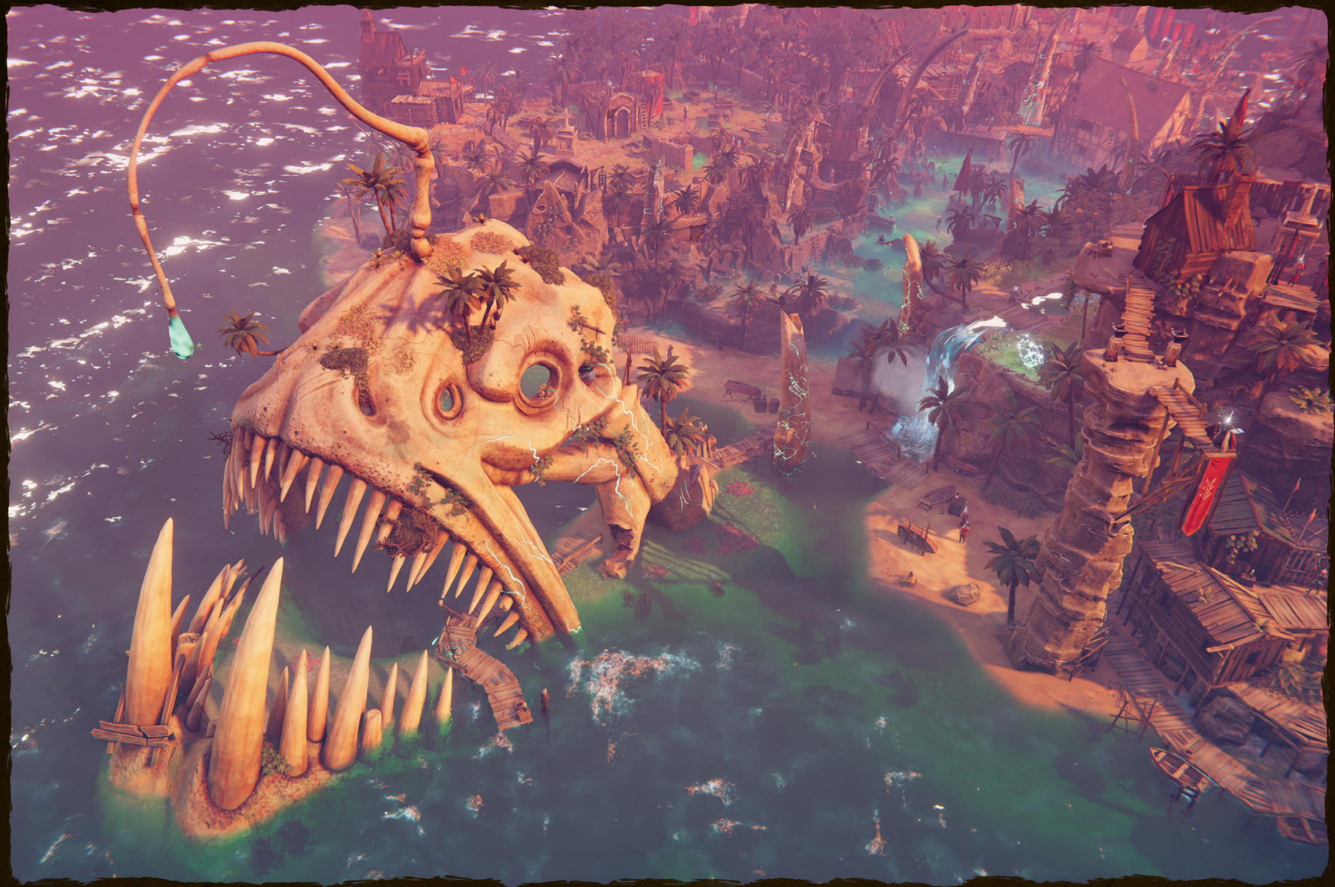
You then finish a mission on trading post **New Krucbury [3]** and the map opens up for a less linear experience across **the islands marked with [4] to [7]** in a **second act**: **Dread Vine’s Cove [4]**, **Isle of Penance [5]**, **Twins of Nerechtemeresch [6]** and **Iron Bay [7]**. The **second act’s finale** takes place on **Gran Alcázar [8]** and its impressive **Inquisition fortress**.

After that, the **third and final act** will “only” unlock **one completely new island** with **Calamity Reef [9]**, some **huge ship graveyard**. But **Angler’s Grave [1]** will finally be fully accessible now for five missions.

You’ll **revisit all islands** now, counting about twenty missions. Eventually you return to **Morrow’s Reach [2]** for the great finale including a **secret location hidden right here in the clouds**.

Let’s look at **all these islands including the missions** they “harbour”...

Angler's Grave



The mighty leviathan of the seas that was once dragged onto this island by brave and foolish hunters is now **Angler's Grave prime landmark**. Otherwise a bustling **shanty town** thrives in the shadow of the Angler's bones. At its **markets** you'll find meat and marrow of the ancient carcass. **Inquisition** has set up a **small garrison** and harasses the townsfolk. The **island's graveyard** is of special attention to the **Inquisition**, as the Angler's guts have long seeped into the soil, drenching the earth with **Soul Energy**. Good to know...

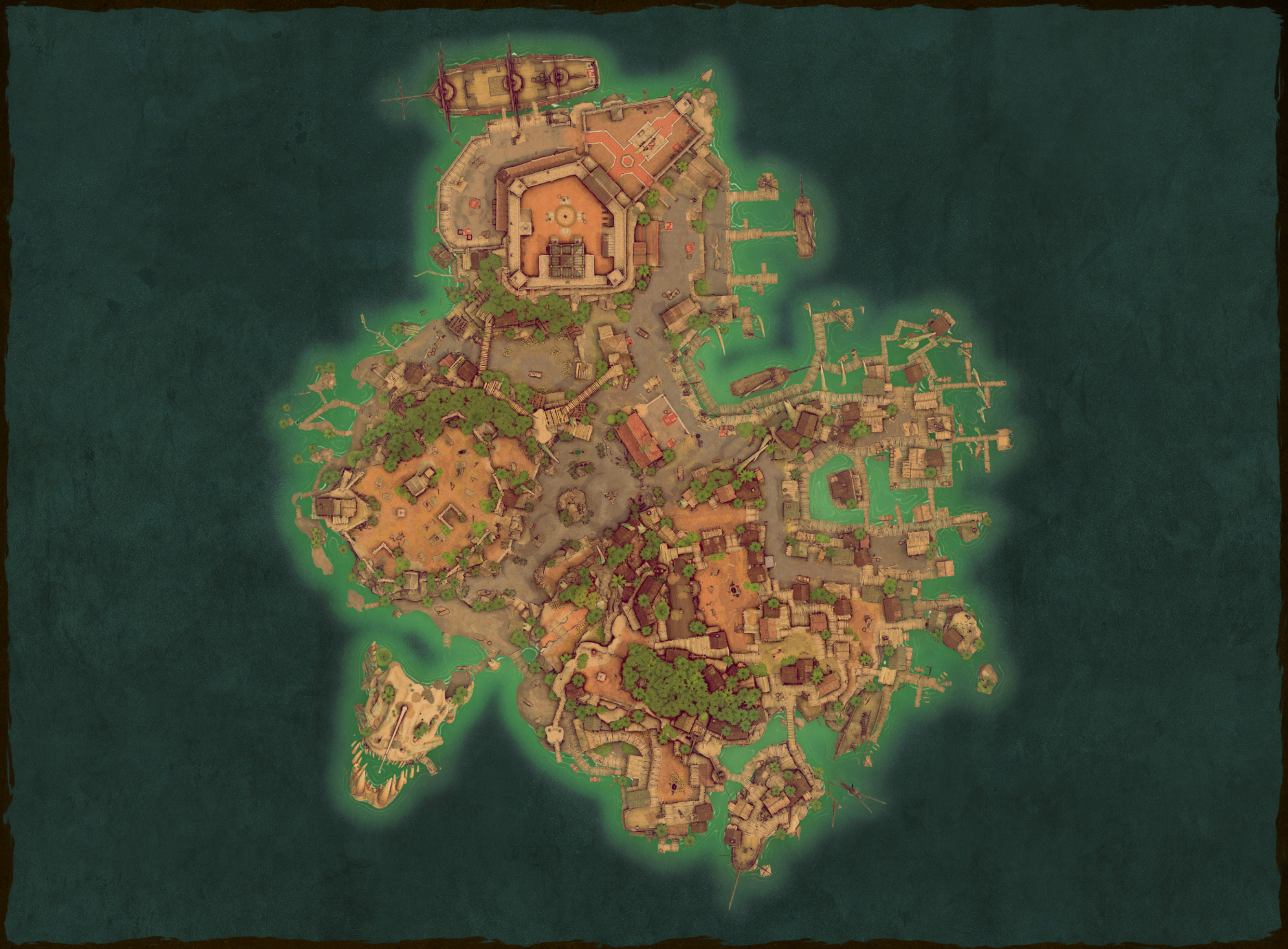
Our own journey begins on this very island with **Afia**, who has an appointment with the **Trickster Virgilio**. It will only be a brief visit though with **Afia** getting teleported to **Morrow's Reach** pretty much right away by the capable **Trickster**. There she will free the **Marley** from the clutches of the **Inquisition**. But the **Cursed Crew** will return to this **island** for some **Soul Energy** and a **Black Pearl** in the final act of the game. **Gaëlle**, **John** and **Toya** also have business here for their respective **"Captain's Test" questlines**.

The Trickster waiting

RED MARLEY

You have yet to finish your tale, Ship Cook.

Get that drop of Lantern Oil, Toya!



Mission Overview

1a - The Trickster

Afia meets the **Trickster** and gets teleported to **Morrow's Reach** on a rescue mission for the **Red Marley**.

🔓 introductory mission

1b - Graveyard Haunt

Somewhere in **Angler's Grave** a **Black Pearl** lies hidden. Find out where it is, but also take the hint...

🔓 act 3, with 8b completed

1c - The Kumquat Connection

An old contact here can supply the **Crew** with some concentrated **Soul Energy**. They pay him a visit.

🔓 act 3, with 8b completed

1d - Gaëlle's Letter (Ch. 2)

An old acquaintance of **Gaëlle** lives at **Angler's Grave**. She hopes that she can find him here.

🔓 act 3, Gaëlle's quest, after 9c

1e - John's Revenge (Ch. 2)

John's old crewmate **Rosaline** is somewhere in **Angler's Grave**. Finding her won't be easy.

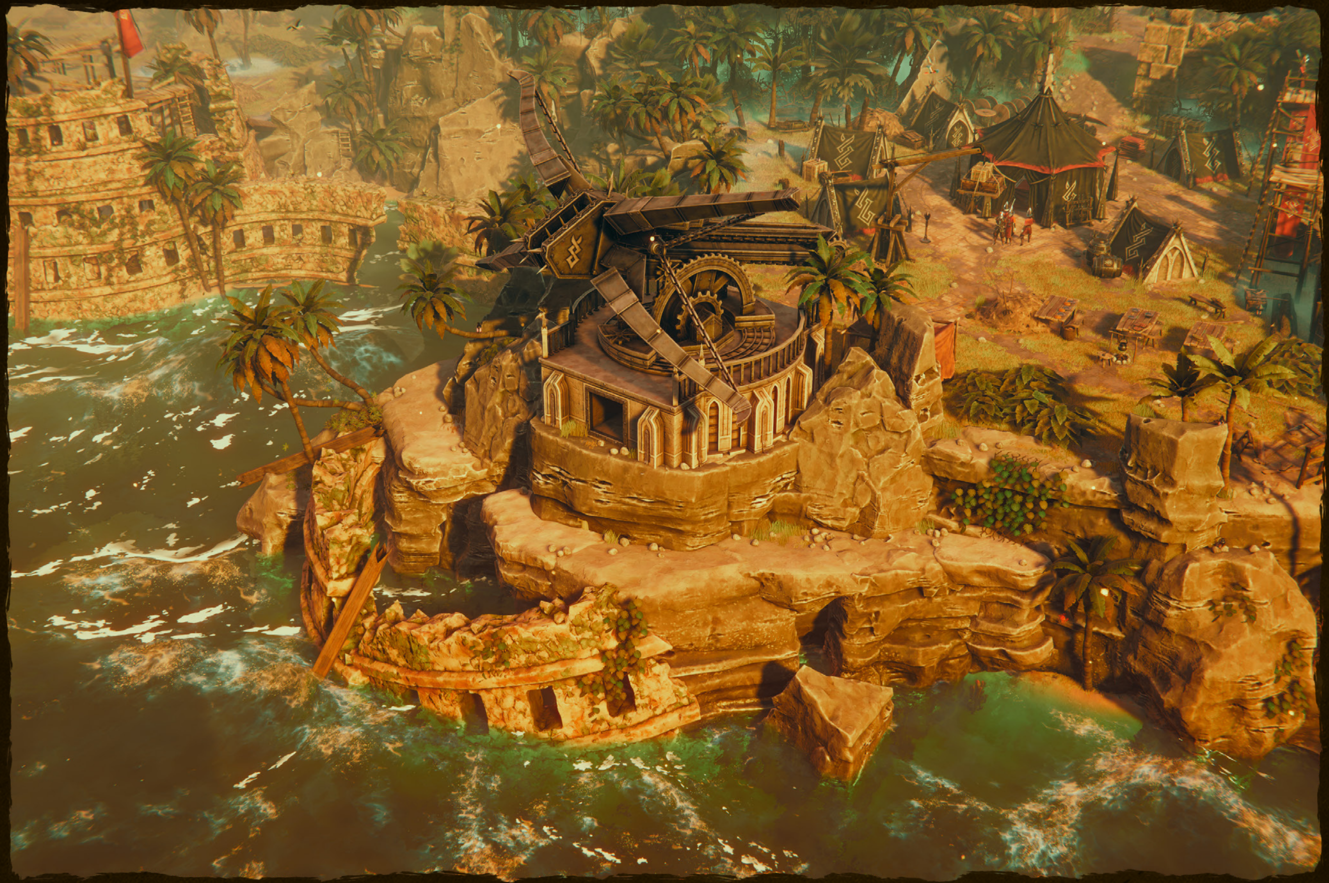
🔓 act 3, John's quest, after 6b

1f - Toya's Perfection (Ch. 1)

Browse the Angler Festival for ingredients so **Toya** can create a very special dish.

🔓 act 3, Toya's quest begin

Morrow's Reach

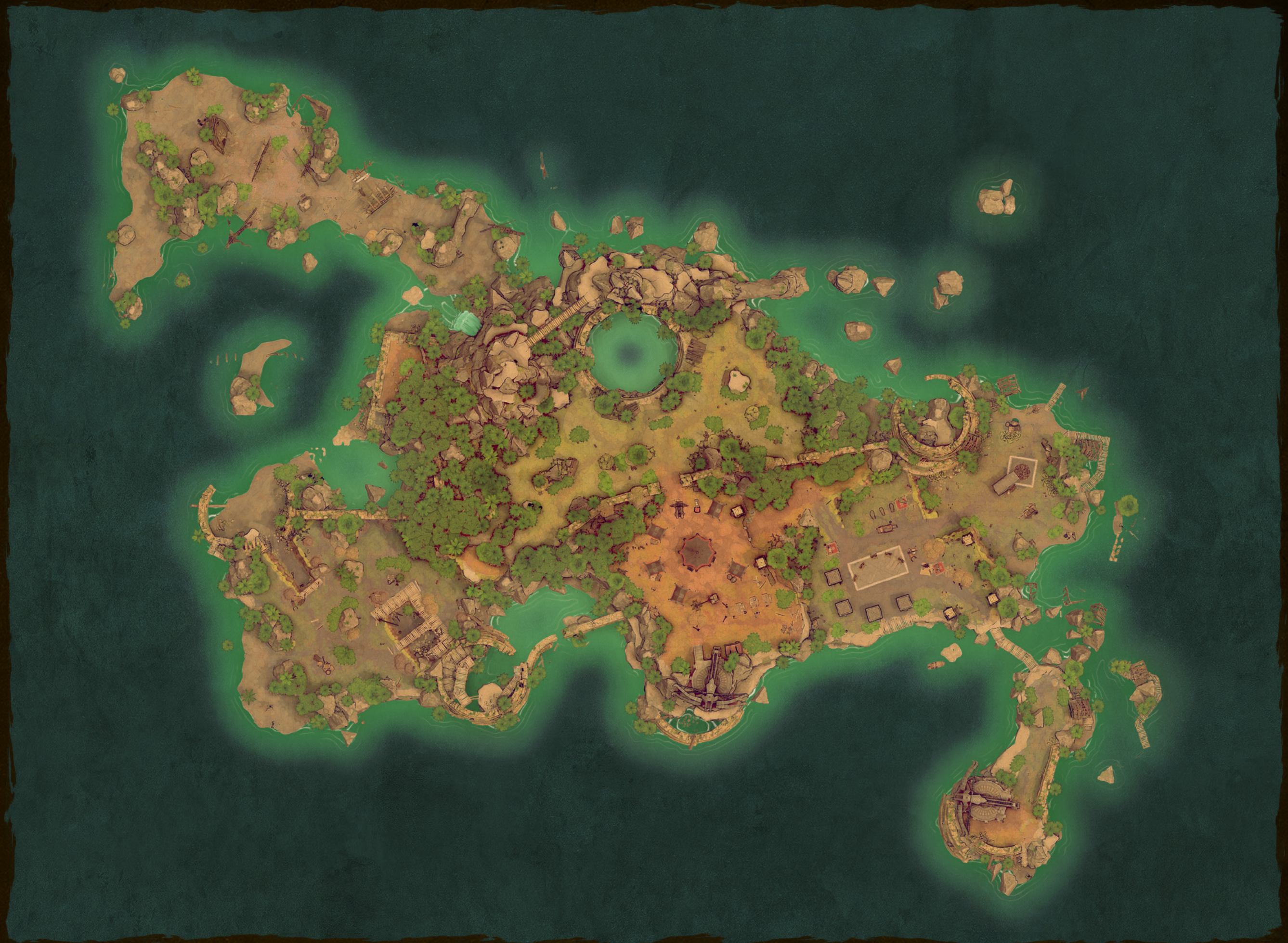


The long hunt for **Mordechai's** treasure leads both the **Red Marley** and **Inquisitor Ignacia** to this strange little island, where a vital clue is supposed to be hidden. In the very first you encounter, **Ignacia** has lured the **Marley** into a trap, keeping the **ship** in the **island's bay**. Unsatisfied with the answers the **Red Marley** gives her, she calls for **Rite of Interrogation**. **Afia** arrives just in time to rescue the **ship** by night and its **crew** on another mission by daylight. The chase for **Captain Mordechai's** treasure continues on a journey across the **Timeless Shores** that will eventually make the **crew** return to this "key" island in the great finale of the game.

AFIA
Huh... according to the stars, this island isn't too far from Angler's Grave.

Beaches by night...

... torture by daylight.



Mission Overview

2a - Red Marley Rising

Afia makes a deal with a mysterious **Trickster** and rescues a ghost ship named **Marley** from the **Inquisition**.

🔒 act 1, with island

2b - A Ship Needs a Crew

Return to **Morrow's Reach** and free **the crew** from the clutches of the **Inquisition**.

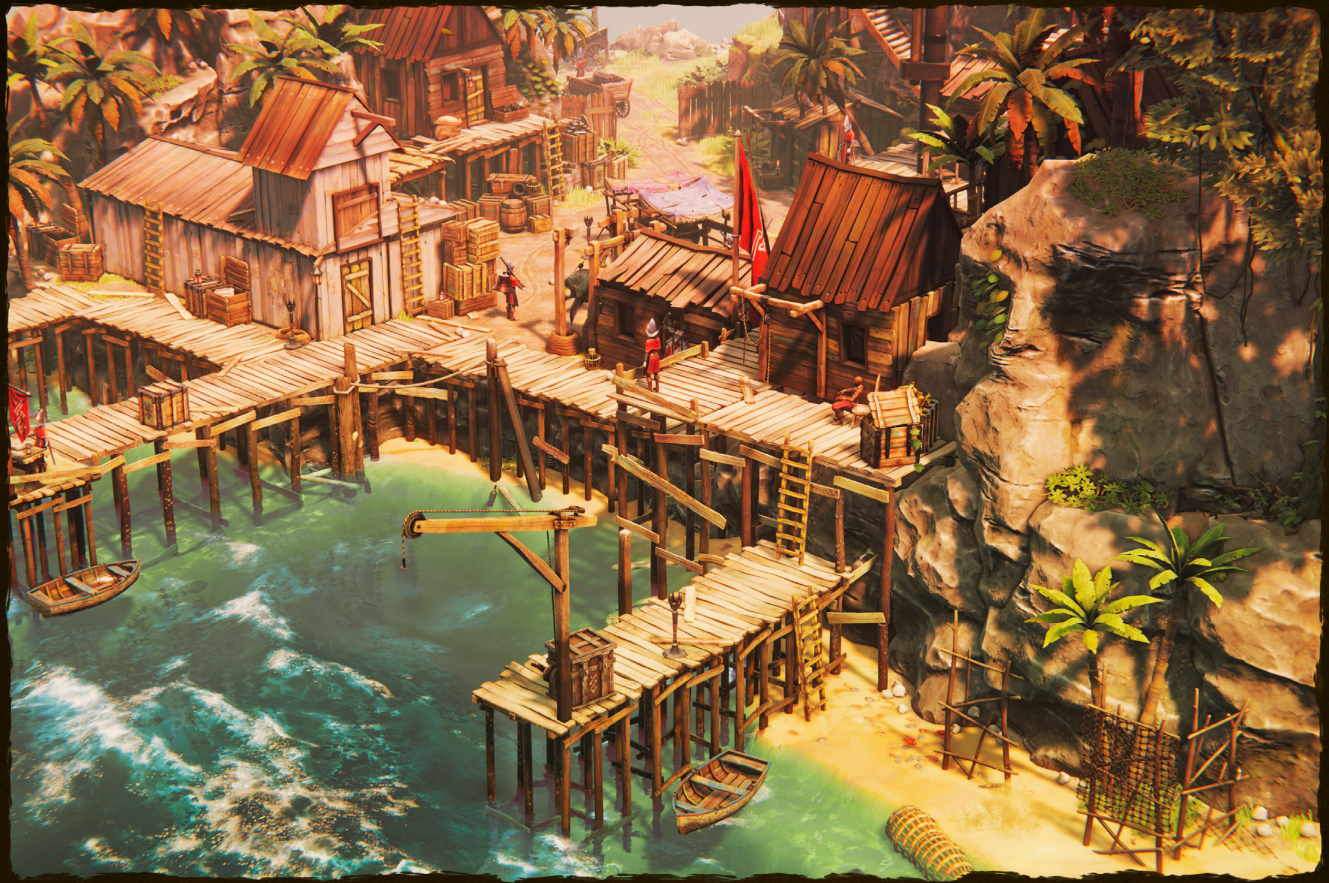
🔒 act 1, with 2a completed

2c - The Captain's Treasure

Once all challenges have been met, the final confrontation with **Ignacia** awaits on **Morrow's Reach**... and **"beyond"**.

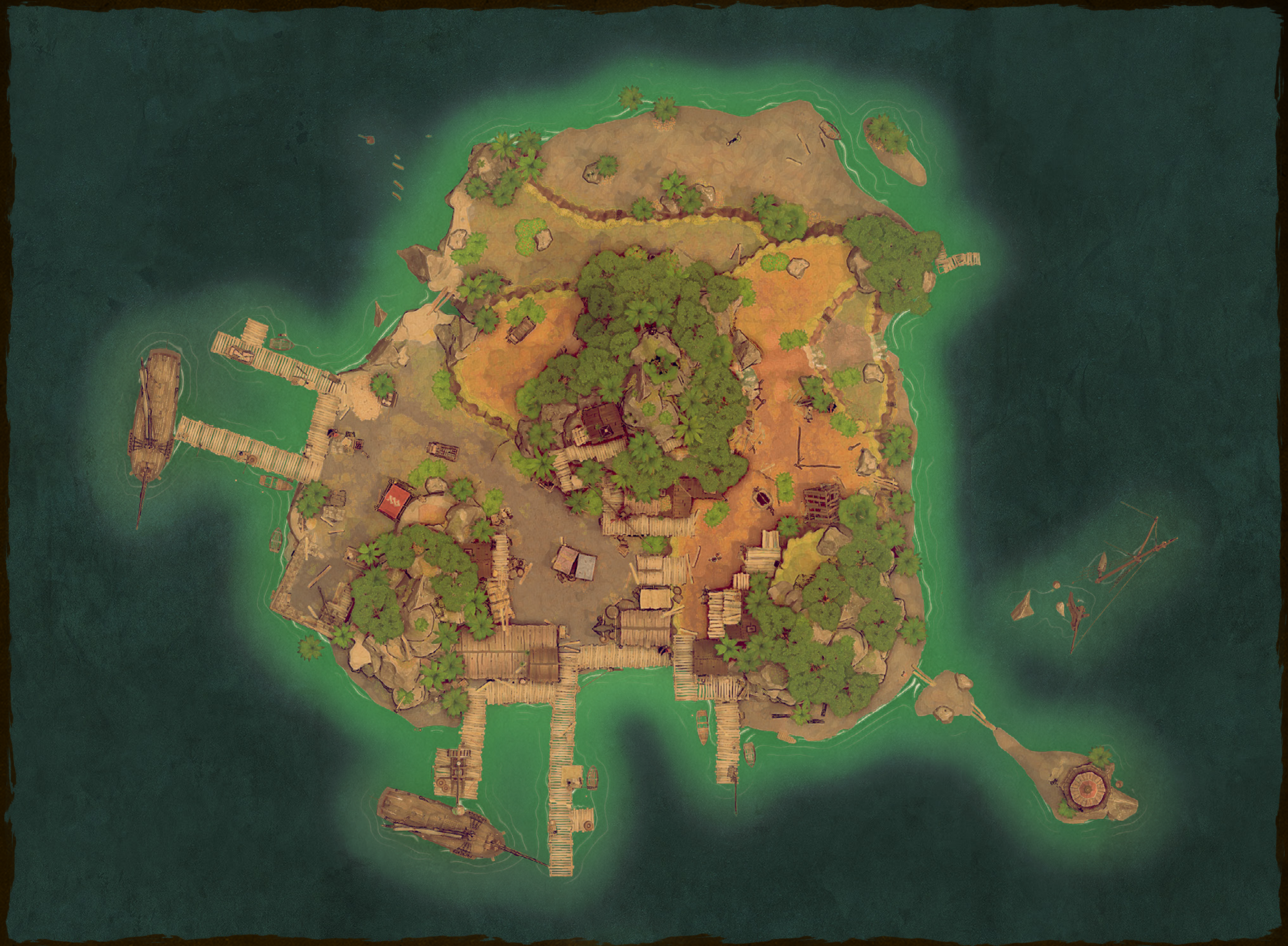
🔒 act 3, 4 Captain's Tests completed

New Krucbury



This island is just a small **trade post** in the **middle of the Timeless Shores**. What was once a haven for ships and traders of all flags has been considerably reshaped by the **Inquisition**. The inhabitants have either been intimidated into submission or relocated to make room for **Ignacia's** plans. **New Krucbury's port** has been expanded and **warehouses** are being constructed to process the constant influx of wares. **Cursed items** from across the shores are delivered here to be examined by **Ignacia's lackeys** in the hopes of finding the answers to the **Captain's** riddle. You visit the **small island** for this very mission named **"Fragments"** early on. But **Gaëlle's Captain's Test** questline will bring you back one more time in the bright of daylight.

Nightshift on New Krucbury



Mission Overview

3a - Fragments

Someone at **New Krucbury** knows the **Captain's** riddle. Go for it and steal the secret for yourself. **Marley** will drain some **Soul Energy** from the riddle slab found.

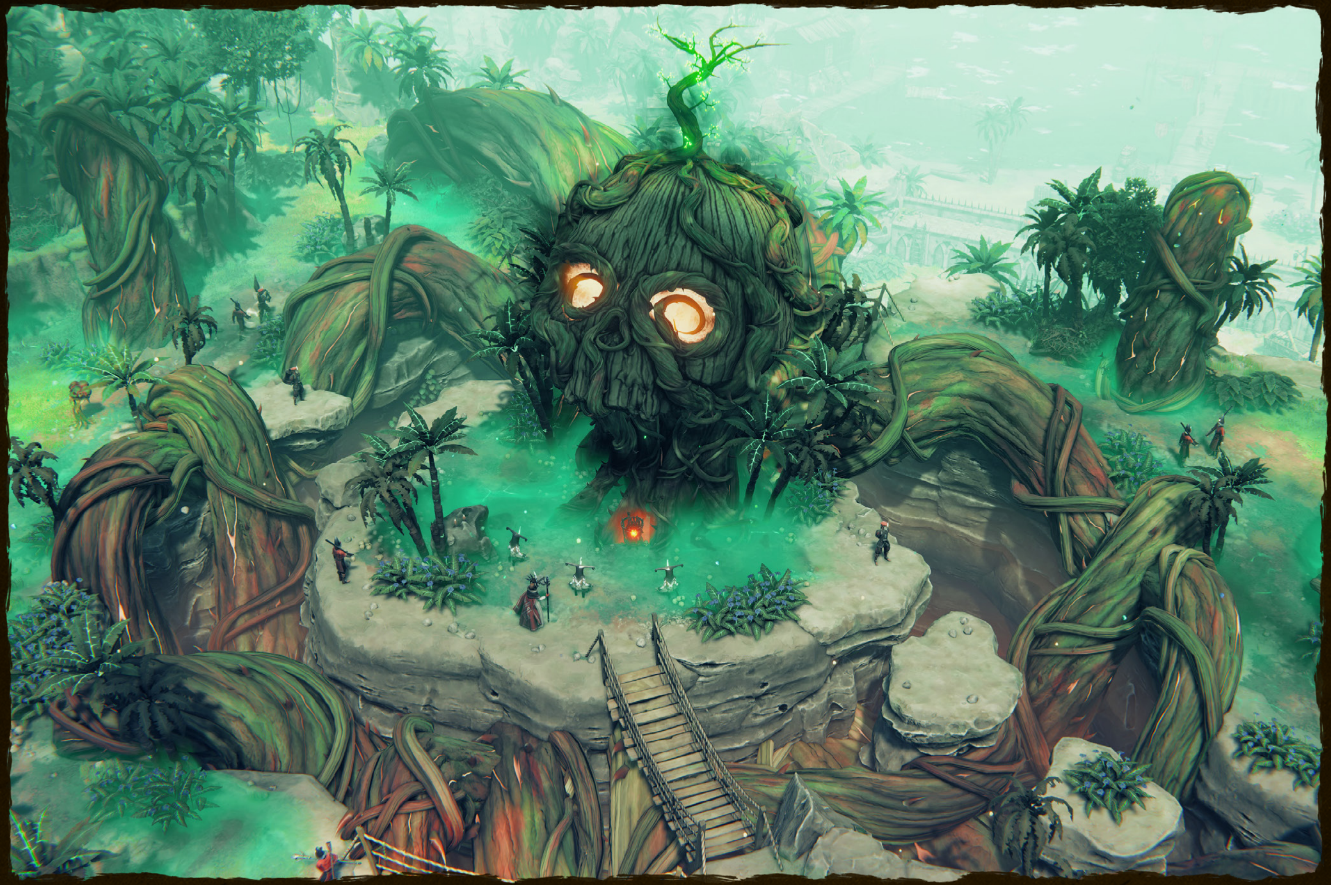
🔒 act 1, with island

3d - Gaëlle's Letter (Ch. 3)

Having written the final letter, **Gaëlle** just has to give it to **Arimtice** for the finale of her character questline with the **Captain's Test**.

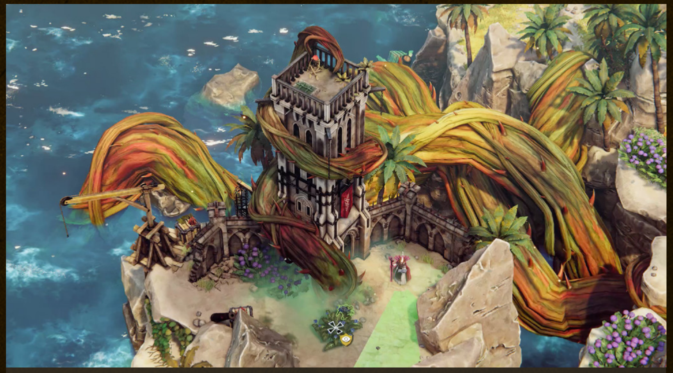
🔒 act 3, Gaëlle's quest, after 1d

Dread Vine's Cove

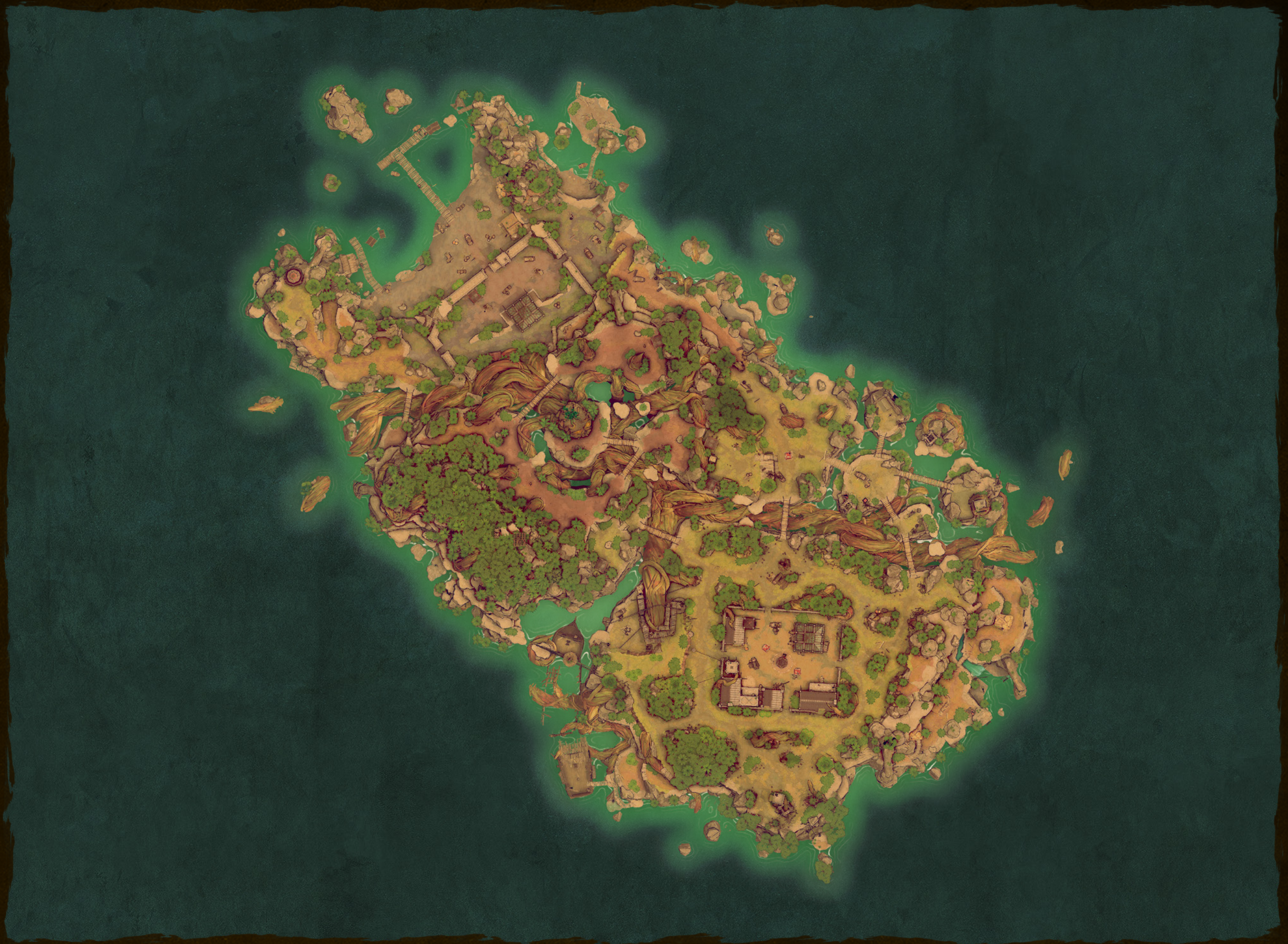


A **wild island** overgrown by cursed flora. It is the seat of the mighty **Dread Vine**, an eldritch plant of incredible age. Its roots span across the island, creeping tentacles of bark and thorn that divide the very land with their presence. The **Captain** once negotiated a pact between the **Crew** and the **Dread Vine**, granting them safe harbor in its domain. Now the **Inquisition** has claimed the island, prodding and dissecting the **Dread Vine**. White marble now juts from the jungle like giant bones as the **Inquisition** do their work, even in the shadow of the **Dread Vine's** terrible wrath.
The **Cursed Crew** will use the situation to their advantage and appeal to the **Dread Vine** in their hunt for **relics** and **Black Pearls**. Later on in the game, **Suleidy** will begin and also finish her **Captain's Test** here in a single mission shining a light on **Suleidy's** close relationship and history with the **Dread Vine**.

Those Beaches



The Rooted Tower



Mission Overview

4a - Bark and Bramble

The **Dread Vine** guards one of **Mordechai's relics**. Convince it to hand it over.

🔓 act 2, with island

4b - Haggling With a Plant

The **Dread Vine** has a **Black Pearl** in its possession. Perhaps it can be bargained with?

🔓 act 2, with island

4c - Fruits of Her Labour

Vile experiments are being conducted on . Uncover intent.

🔓 act 2, with 4a and 4b completed

4d - Suleidy's Cure

Find out what manner of quarrel lies between **Suleidy** and the **Dread Vine**.

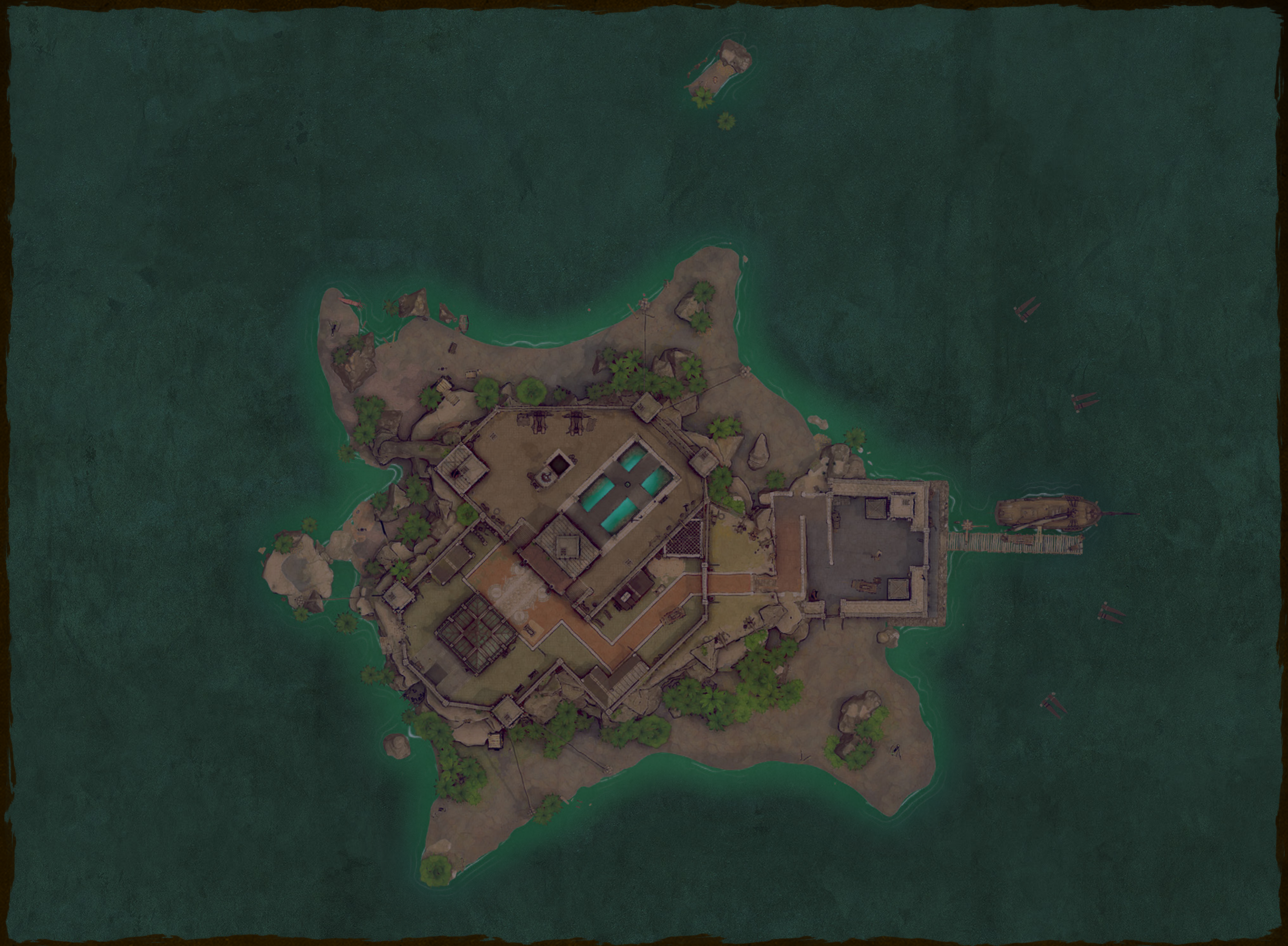
🔓 act 3, Suleidy's quest begin

Isle of Penance

A **prison** made for souls. The **Inquisition** brings prisoners who died before serving their full sentence to places like this, where they "complete" their punishment. The prisoners' lingering souls are scraped from their bodies with fire-blessed tools before they are incarcerated in sacred urns. It's devastating to put it mildly. Thousands of them are entombed in the belly of the **fortress**, while their bodies have long been discarded. Rumor has it that some souls have been held here for over a century, long driven mad by their imprisonment. The **Cursed Crew** only pays the **Isle of Penance** one visit on their hunt for **Captain Mordechai's relics**. Sadly, they lack the means to destroy this **prison** and must leave most of the poor souls to their terrible fate.

Suleidy finding her way into the fortification

Making an exit



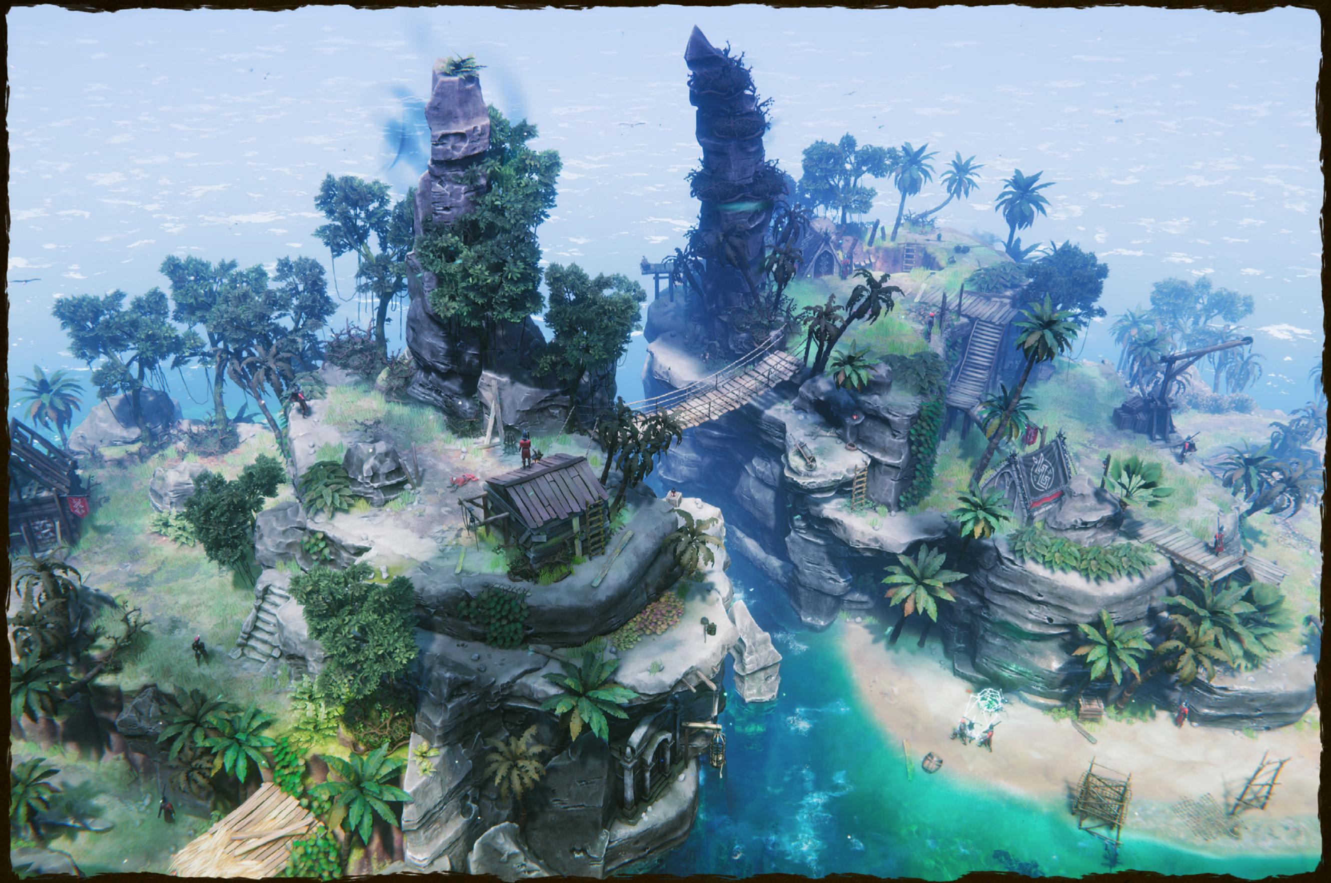
Mission Overview

5a - Bone and Fingers

An **old associate** lies imprisoned here, who knows the secret to one of **Mordecai's relics**.

act 2, with island

Twins of Nerechtemeresch

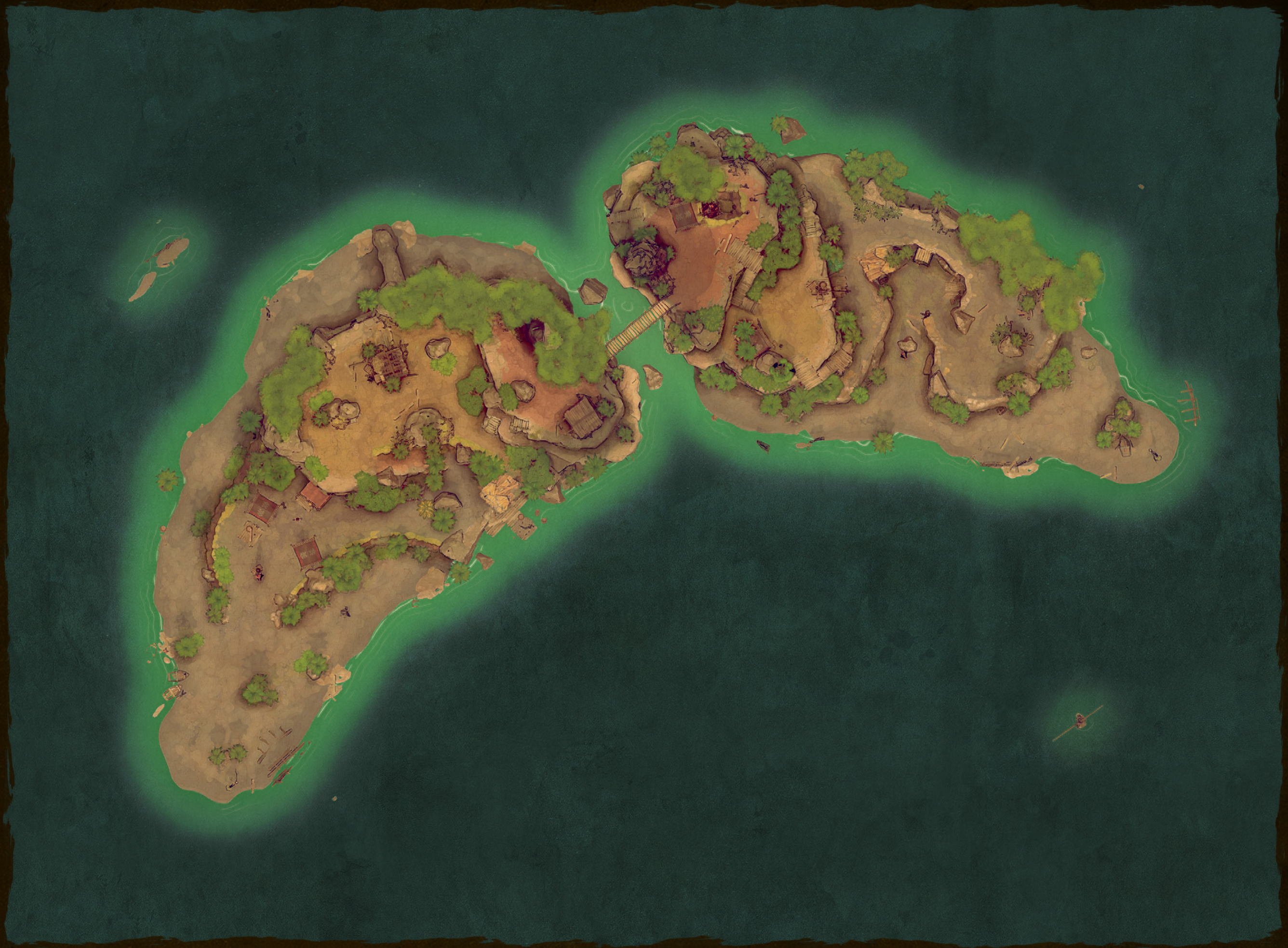


This **little island** is haunted by the **powerful souls of long dead siblings**. The **twins** are quite mad and delight in reducing visitors to their personal playthings. No doubt the **Inquisition** forces here have already fallen victim to their schemes. The **Cursed Crew** must navigate their negotiations carefully, lest they end up sharing their fate.

Besides being haunted in that fashion, this **double island archipelago** is well known for its vivid beach life including **guards of the Inquisition** hunting after any footprint in the sand they are able to spot. A beautiful playground for the **crew** that visits the **Twins** once on their journey for a **Black Pearl**, but will return here later, supporting **John** in his **Captain's Test**, looking for some old crew-mates of his...

Playing Games with peculiar bushes

Twin siblings - Kindred Sisters



Mission Overview

6a- Prepare For Trouble

The **Twins** might be convinced to part with their **Black Pearl**, if they can be reasoned with at all.

act 2, with island

6b - John's Revenge (Ch. 1)

Two of **John's** old crewmates are roaming the **Twins of Nerechtemeresch**. Get them!

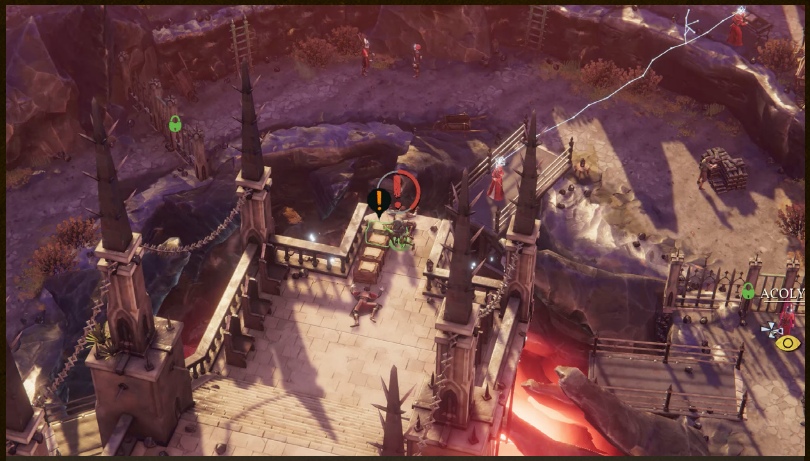
act 3, John's quest begin

Iron Bay

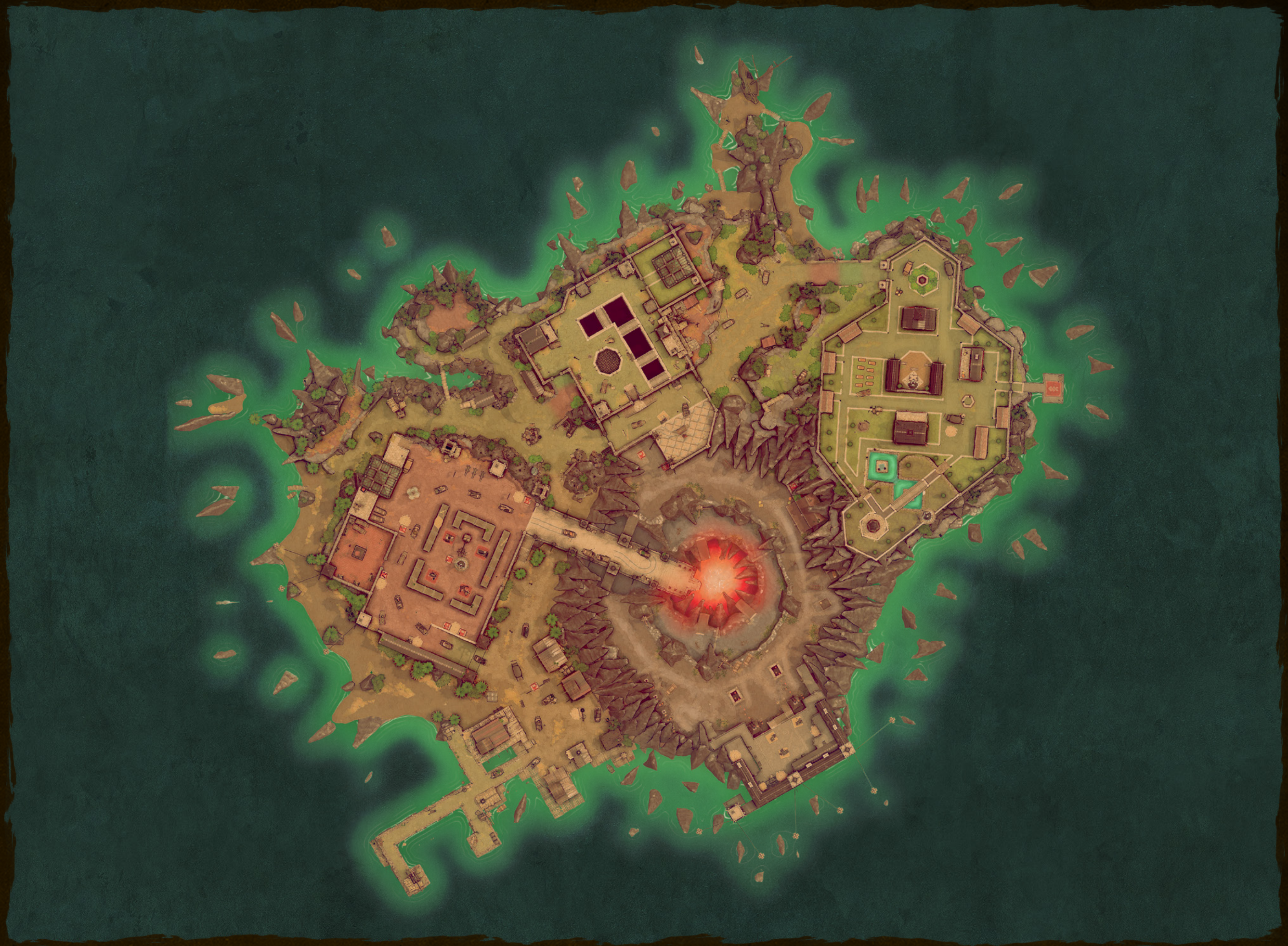
Once a charming and haunted atoll, this island was transformed into a blazing furnace by the **Inquisition's divine alchemists**. Cursed items from across the **Timeless Shores** are gathered here to be scrutinized and catalogued. Humans suspected of heresy are interrogated and sent to the tunnels below to do their penance.

Soldiers who were driven mad by curse or **Fire** are in the sanatorium for treatment. Endless mounds of cursed detritus are thrown into the **purification pit at the island's heart**. The **Maiden's Fire** turns it all into blessed iron, ready to be forged into armaments for the **Inquisition**.

Black Pearl in sight



Finding a relic piece right at the pit's jump pad



Mission Overview

7a - Snatched From the Pit

A **Black Pearl** was delivered to the **Iron Bay**. Let's grab it before they destroy it.

act 2, with island

7b - Ash and Ore

A **relic** lies hidden in the maddening machinery of the **Iron Bay**. Brave the **Inquisition's** dogma to retrieve it.

act 2, with island

7c - Pinkus' Duty (Ch. 1)

It seems **Pinkus** has left a servant of his in prison. Let's hope he's still there...

act 3, John's quest begin

7d - Teresa's Lament (Ch. 1)

Teresa requires a confidant to walk the path of the **Maiden**. She claims that there is a likely candidate in the sanatorium at the **Iron Bay**.

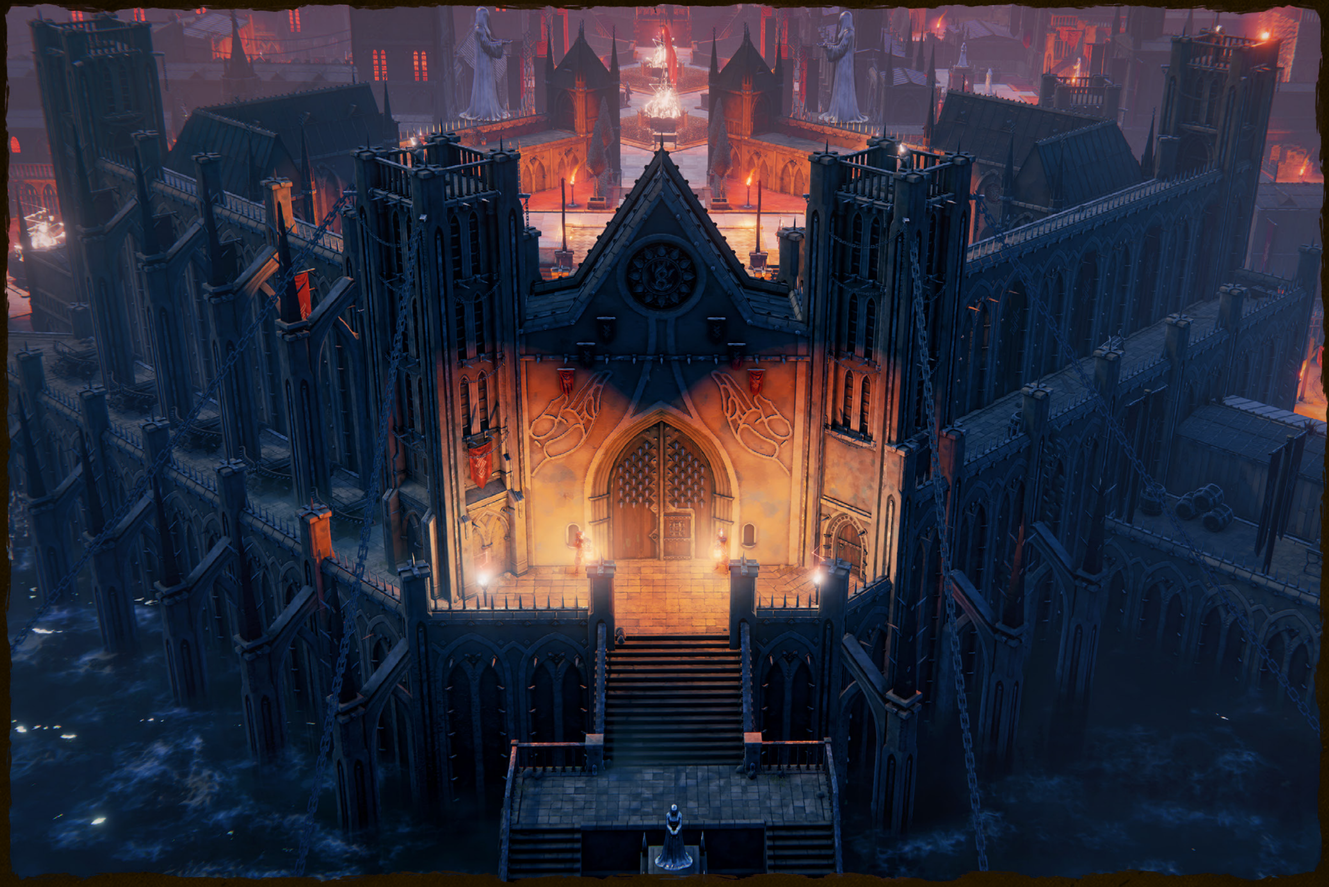
act 3, Teresa's quest begin

7e - Quentin's Hunt (Ch. 2)

After following a string of clues, **Quentin** has arrived at the **Iron Bay** with a foreboding riddle.

act 3, Quentin's quest, after 9e

Gran Alcázar

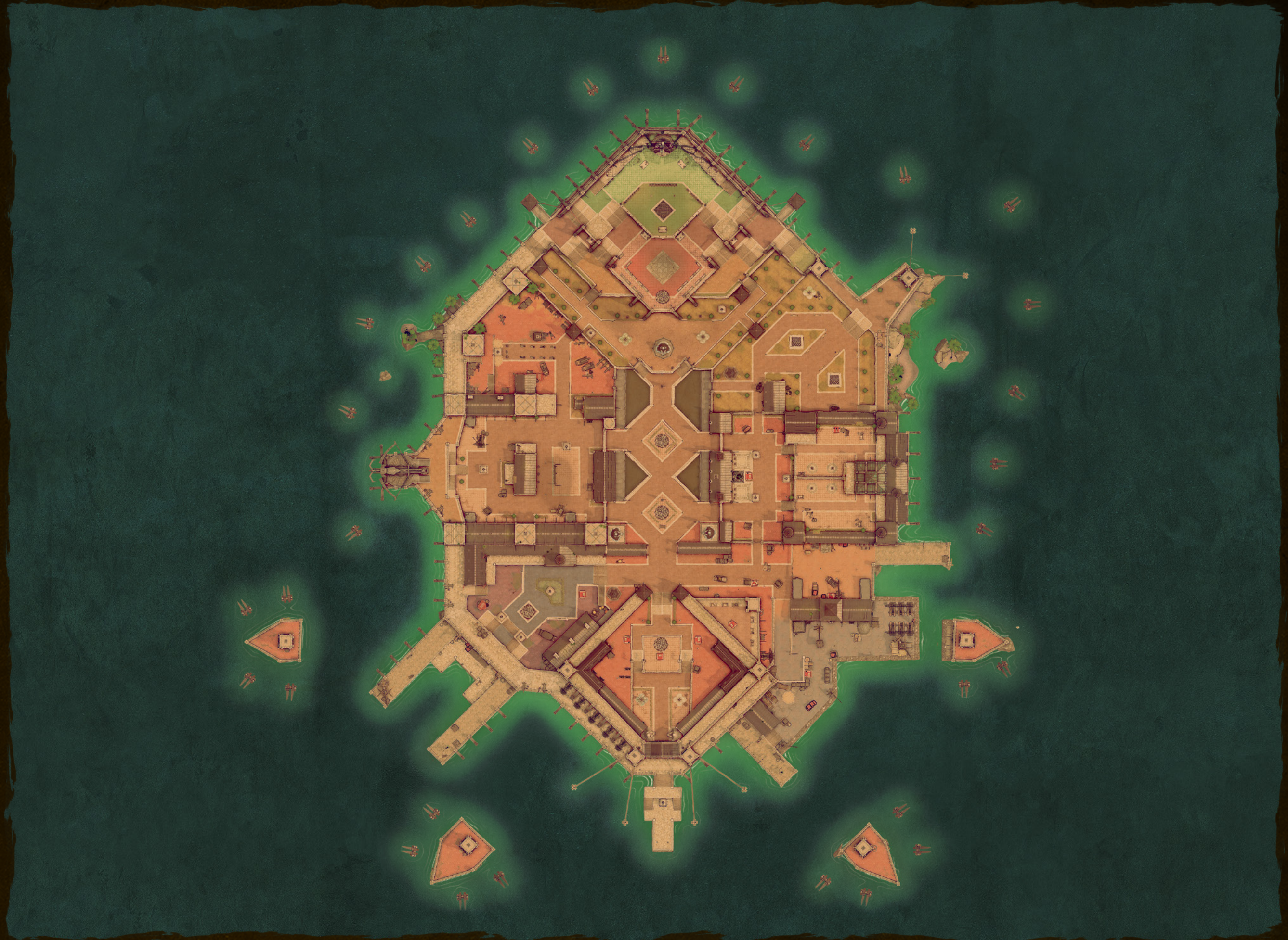


This major **Inquisition fortress** is a dark impression of the world they envision. Behind its impregnable walls, every stone has been carefully arranged to conform with their **Grand Design**. **Acolytes** undergo rigorous training at the **barracks** and **smithy**, their schedule planned down to the second. At the **Divinitorium**, the zealots peer into the **Maiden's Fire** to gain their crazed visions, before resting their mind at the gardens. Pilgrims arrived here daily to pray at the **open cathedral**, a monument to the **Inquisition's** self-aggrandizing history. Since Ignacia has taken residence here, **Gran Alcázar** closed its gates to pilgrims, no doubt in preparation for some vile Rite of hers.

A Custodes shielding Mordechai's skull

Gran Alcázar is the **"Lion's Den"** where the mid-game finale takes place in a first two-part mission showdown with **Inquisitor Ignacia**. No other place would be more fitting. **Ignacia** sets up a trap for the **crew** and even controlling the passage of time will not be reliable anymore.

In the third act **Pinkus** and **Teresa** have to return to the **fortress** for their **Captain's Tests**. But first **Mordechai's skull** has to be found and repossessed - in quite a literal sense...



Mission Overview

8a - Into the Lion's Den

Ignacia has **Mordechai's** skull. Infiltrate **Gran Alcázar** and snatch it from her clutches.

act 2, after Captain's Riddle solved

8b - Ignacia Unleashed

Ignacia's trap has sprung. Even **the Marley** was pulled in. Get in there and turn this ship around.

act 2, with 8a completed

8c - Pinkus' Duty (Ch. 2)

A burial by the **Maiden's Judgement**. What one doesn't do for their servants...

act 3, Pinkus' quest, after 7c

8d - Teresa's Lament (Ch. 2)

Teresa must walk the **Maiden's Path** at **Gran Alcázar**. Here's hoping her soul can still withstand the **Maiden's Fire**.

act 3, Teresa's quest, after 7d

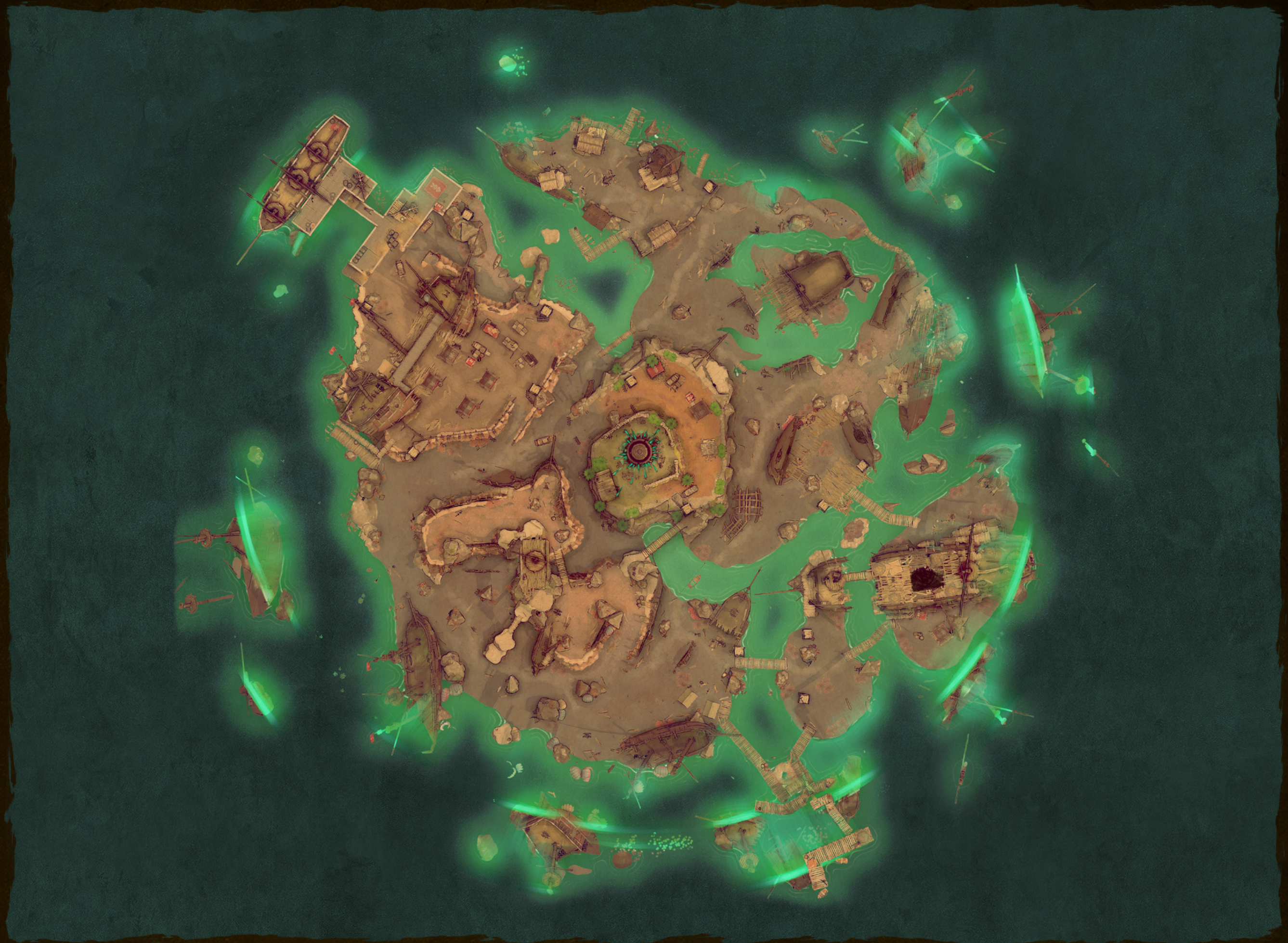
Calamity Reef

This **graveyard of haunted wrecks** was once the site of a sea battle between Blackbeard and the Third Iron Fleet. Energies unleashed by Blackbeard during the clash have twisted this place beyond reason. Shipwrecks lie smashed and grounded by rampant physics, while ocean flora grows in abundance in the open air. Lost souls mingle here with the mindless echoes of the dead, who prowl the sands in endless mockery of their final moments. The **lighthouse** stands at the epicenter of the catastrophe, perpetually frozen in its shattering, its glow driving away the very tides themselves. The **Inquisition** has established a **shaky foothold** here, though cleansing this place would take them years, if doing so were even possible.

Strangely weird beaches at Calamity Reef

The **Cursed Crew** will come around for **Calamity Reef** in the third and final act, still searching for the **last Black Pearls and Soul Energy** to revive all **remaining crewmates** that still linger in slumber on the **Marley's deck**.

With **Gaëlle**, **Toya** and **Quentin**, three **veterans of the crew** will also have to explore this **island** when they are called to their respective **Captain's Tests**.



Mission Overview

9a - Lighthouse Locutions

On top of the **falling lighthouse**, a **Black Pearl** awaits. Getting up there might be harder than it seems.

🔒 act 3, with 8b completed

9b - Small Crew, Big Plans

Another pirate crew has sent a call for help from **Calamity Reef**. If we help, we might get some **Soul Energy** in exchange.

🔒 act 3, with 8b completed

9c - Gaëlle's Letter (Ch. 1)

Some of **Gaëlle's** belongings are stored on a **wreck** on **Calamity Reef**. She needs to get them back.

🔒 act 3, Gaëlle's quest begin

9d - Toya's Perfection (Ch. 2)

Toya must test his cooking and his blade against a legendary pirate.

🔒 act 3, Teresa's quest, after 1f

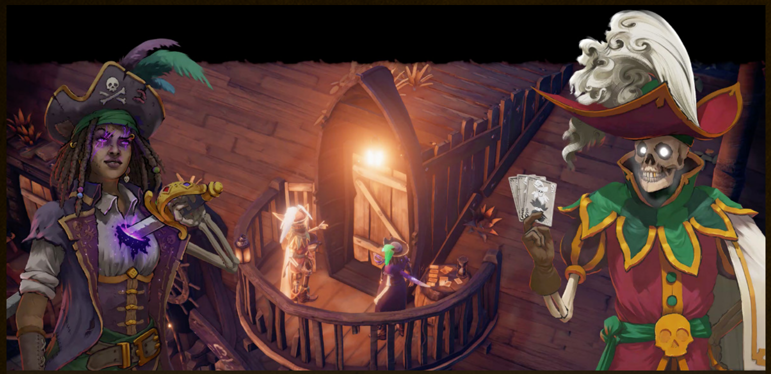
9e - Quentin's Hunt (Ch. 1)

Quentin inherited a map from his father. Let's see where it leads.

🔒 act 3, Quentin's quest begin

1a - The Trickster on Angler's Grave

You start the journey with **Afia Manicato** who will stick with you as a sort of main character. She's the navigator after all. This story mission includes a simple task: traverse the shanty town and meet and talk to a bony **Trickster** whose name is yet unknown and will later be revealed as **Virgilio**.



A dubious but nonetheless first and clearly undead ally.

Right now, and as the **Trickster** is apparently known for "arranging things", he will set **Afia** up for the path to the **"Red Marley", a ghost ship** that is - surprisingly - also **Marley**, a central character. The **ship** itself will become the **hub and command headquarter** for the game and you will soon find yourself returning to it after each mission, assembling your entourage, **upgrading skills** among many other things.
The Trickster teleports **Afia** to a different location at the end of the dialogue... "Now, shall we begin?".

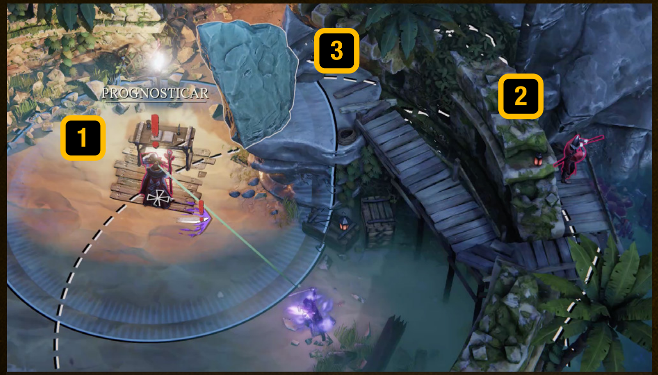
2a - Red Marley Rising on Morrow's Reach

Main Goal: Find and fight your way to the **Red Marley** and rescue the ship from the Inquisition.

Time of day: Night **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 0 **Crew Size:** 2 **Required:**

Rewards: The **Red Marley** (in a sense). **Two Black Pearls** **Soul Energy**

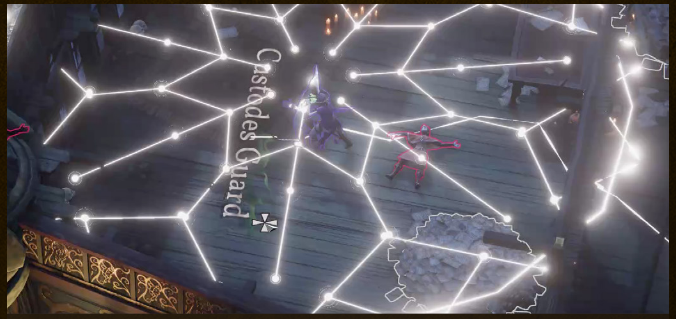
You will play a dedicated **Afia** tutorial under deck of the **Red Marley** later, but this mission is already partly about learning and trying **Afia's** great abilities. But mainly you learn about the very basics of the game including melee strikes, the hiding of bodies, staying low for being undetected.



Rockaway beach

Approach the **Red Marley** and witness the interrogation of the ship by **Ignacia.** You heard about "Five of Marley's crew assemble" and "Mordechai's Riddle" first here. Enter the **Marley**, work through the **setups of guards** and all three of the enigmatic **Custodes guards** to free the **Marley** from the magical chains of the **Inquisition**.

In an early key sequence you can only fail against a **Prognosticar [1]**, who is impossible to beat with a single crewmate unless already agitated. Use the freshly introduced temporal rewind as told, and you will see that the **Acolyte guard [2]** above is now in another position. This allows you to **Blink** for killing the **Acolyte** while also getting to **higher grounds [3]**. Push the huge rock there, burying the **Progosticar** and you're well on the way to free **Red Marley** once again.



Don't hesitate to hit Custodes guards

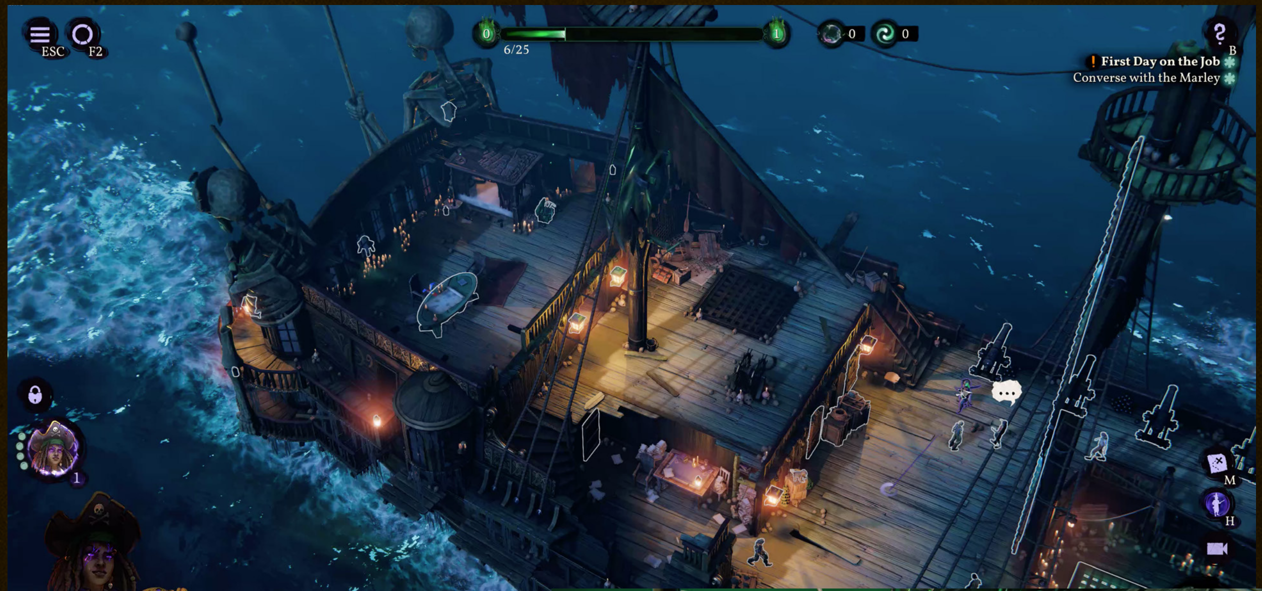
The Red Marley - Ship & Command

You're only a few steps away now from playing the first story mission you access "properly" from the **map table on the Red Marley**. Leading up to that you have to find your way around the **Red Marley** first and prepare this mission.

What you have to do is gather two **Black Pearls** by talking to **Gertrude**, **Pete** and the **Nameless One**. These **Pearls** will be used to revive the **first two members of The Cursed Crew**, although the **Soul energy** necessary will only be enough to revive one for now. There are **two crew members** still on board. So you have the agony of choice for the first time: **Suleidy**, the ship doctor, or **Toya of Iga**, the ship cook. You can't really go wrong and no matter who you choose to revive first will be your company for the next mission, that will then bring back the **rest of the undead crew**, currently held hostage and tortured by the **Inquisition** on **Morrow's Reach.**

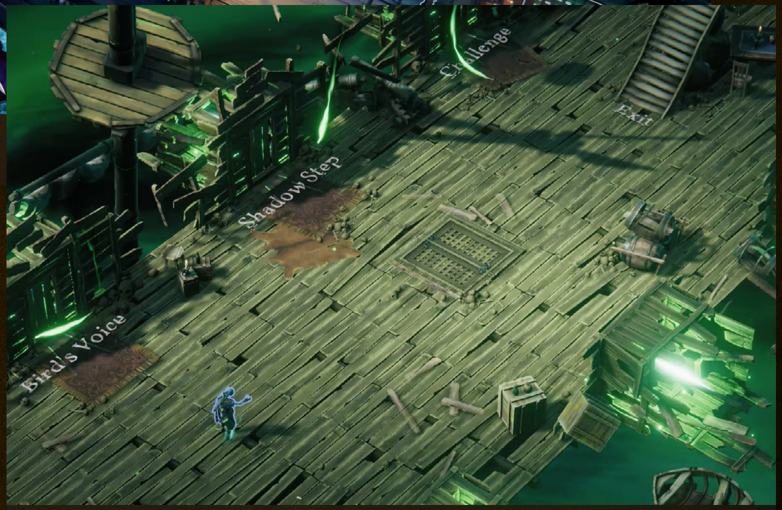
! Your Hub and Ship

Managing things on board of the Red Marley will become your routine from now on. You end missions, come back to the Red Marley, play optional character mission called "Crew Tales", revive members of the Cursed Crew (if you can), upgrade skills (if you can) and eventually prepare and start your next mission by setting sail to one of the islands of the Timeless Shores. Be aware that we focus on story missions in this guide and will set all other things more or less in the context of those missions that drive the plot and progression.



Aboard the Red Marley

Even though being marked as "optional", always remember to play the tutorial missions **below the Red Marley's deck**. You can play these right away or any time after you've revived a **crewmate**. You can also play them repeatedly for recap. It's the perfect, single character scenario for learning the unique skills of each **member of the Cursed Crew.** Perfect these skills and use them in teamplay on mission.



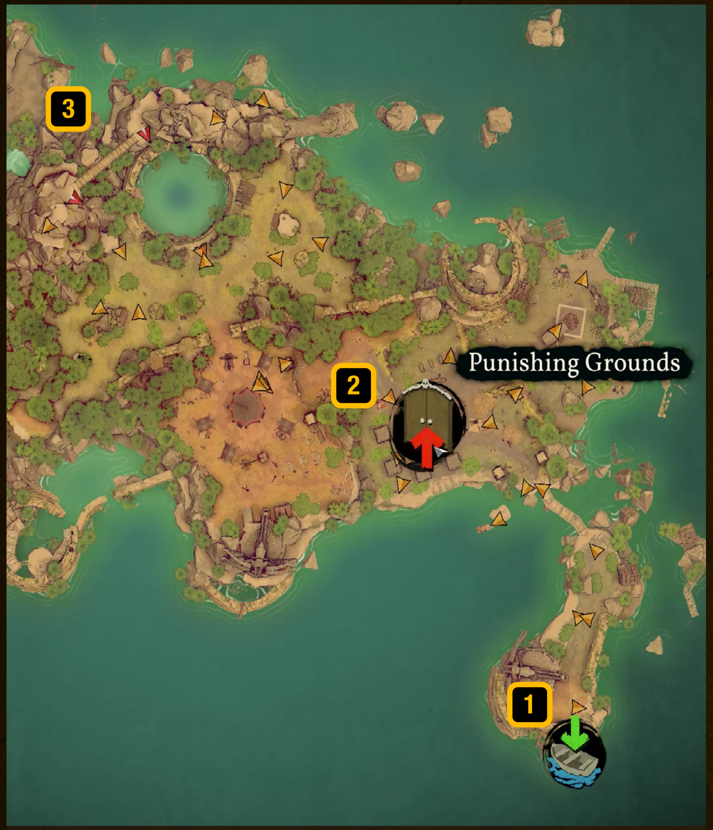
Below deck on Toya's training room

2b - A Ship Needs a Crew on Morrow's Reach

Main Goal: Return to Morrow's Reach and free the crew from the clutches of the Inquisition.

Time of day: Day **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 2 **Required:** Afia
Rewards: Clues for the Captain's Riddle and five dead crewmates back on the Marley's deck.

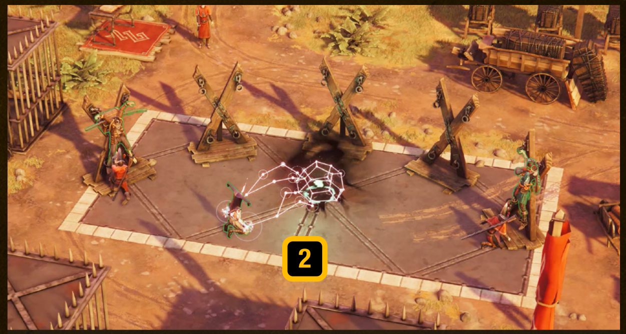
Afia and the one other member of the Crew you've revived return to Morrow's Reach for this mission that you select at the map table. After the mission briefing, you learn about choosing landing points. This time however, you have only one at [1]. So that part is an easy decision. You also get to see the first mission briefing map with guards marked and all.



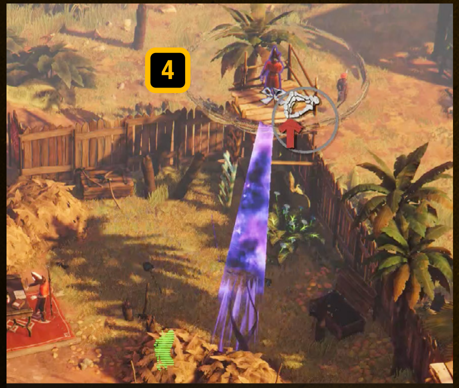
The map part in focus for this mission

The mission briefing shows you the "Punishing Grounds" where the rest of the Crew is going through the Inquisition's "Rite of Punishment". So they either be rescued or sacrificed to the Maiden's Fire. You know what to go for in this first part of the mission.

On these pre-mission maps you will always be presented with all possible landing spots and exits through "Tears in the Below". The latter are always shielded and sealed by some enigmatic Custodes guard [2] that don't have any active abilities besides fulfilling this very task. Hitting them breaks the seal instantly and also unleashes a force that will freeze all guards standing close. Always use that to your advantage!



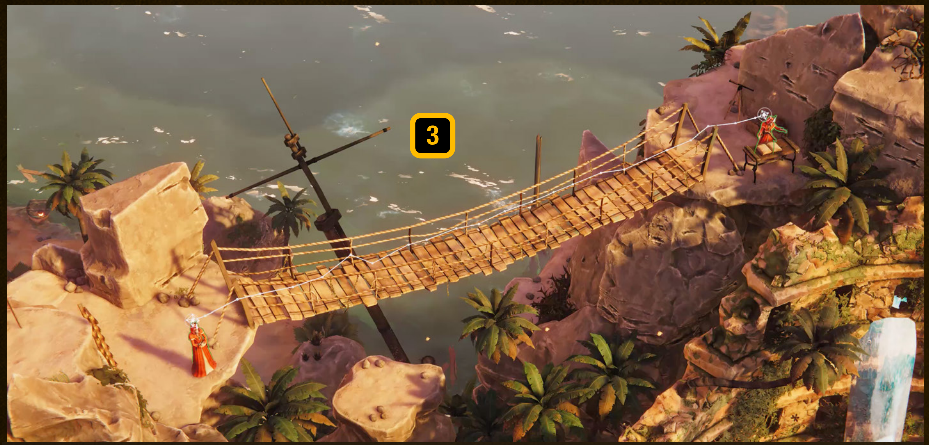
The Custodes (b)locking the exit



Blink action defined

From the landing spot [1] to the "Punishing Grounds" [2] you work through enemy setups, designed to ease you in. The "Punishing Grounds" are also training grounds for getting comfortable with controls and skills at hand. Use Afia's Blink to immediately take out the Acolyte [4] watching the grounds from a higher level. Remember that no guard on lower level is able to spot the body lying there. You're fine.
Then you follow the essential strategy: **observe the routines of guards, time your actions well, make it all easier by using distraction skills, combine actions across team members, use Shadow Mode for critically timed actions and pause the action.**
One by one (and sometimes two), you isolate guards in order to "clean" the grounds form the Inquisition. Then collect the (un)dead bodies of your mates and throw them through the Tear in the Below opened once you've taken care of the Custodes shielding it.

As soon as you've done that, the second part of this mission starts with another briefing. You learn about the Kindred, a new enemy type of the Inquisition besides the ones you already met: Acolyte, Commissarius and the brutal Prognosticar. Here, the Kindred are guarding a book containing Ignacia's notes on the Captain's Riddle. They are always connected by Maiden's Fire and can only be **taken out by hitting them both at the same time**. So this is best orchestrated Shadow Mode. For doing that you have to conquer the bridge [3] somehow, approaching from two sides. So first find and work your way up there with your two crewmates.

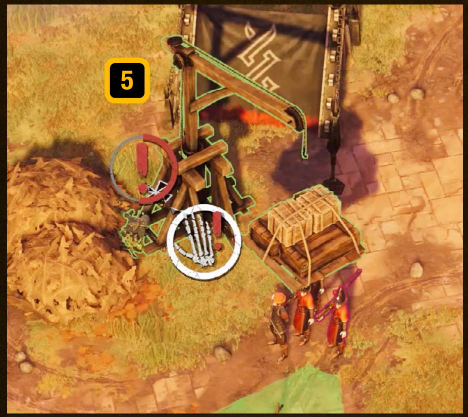


Two linked Kindred guards

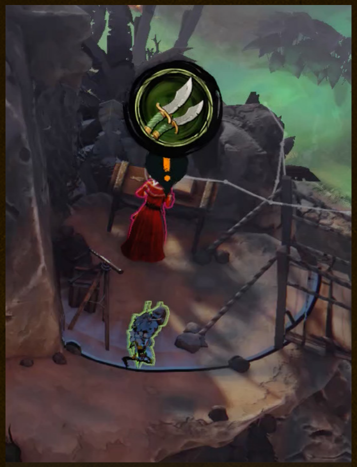
This also means that you have to have to conquer two paths up there as there's no crossing the bridge with it being guarded by the Kindred.

On your way there are some minor but still tricky enemy setups. Intricate routines of patrolling guards you have to watch closely, and deal with. Use teamplay for best effect, but still the fastest way up is to split right up.

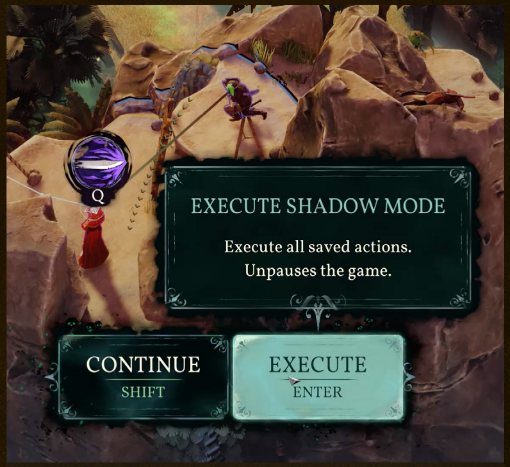
Always make sure to look for things in the environment that might help you. For the path to the west it's hard to miss the hanging crates [5] that are perfect for burying the patrol of one Commissarius and two Acolytes beneath them, instantly turning the light off from a lot of viewcones.



Opportunity taken



To left...



... to the right

Once you made it up there, climbing all the ladders, you sneak behind each guard from both sides and use Shadow Mode for execution - either by planning or pausing. Red Marley will take a look through Afia's eyes and find Ignacia's notes saying that all pieces that fit the riddle's wording are to be sent to New Krucbury. Her representatives were entrusted with the original text and will inspect all findings made there.
Make your way to the Tear in the Below [2] bringing you back to the Red Marley.

Back on the ship, you immediately spot the five crew members aboard that you've thrown through the Tear before. Rescued but not yet revived. You are still holding another Black Pearl but there's no Soul Energy left for another member of the Cursed Crew to join your team yet. It will still be a long way to have them all up and well. Luckily, all character's are great but deciding on who's the next in line to bring back from the dead undead makes the choice even harder and more meaningful for your own progression and path you take through the game...

The Red Marley - The Captain's Riddle

On the **ship** and before setting sail to **New Krucbury**, **Red Marley** will come back to the **Captain's riddle** and what "Five of Marley's crew assemble" might mean. She directs you towards **Estelle**, the ship's monkey, guiding you under deck to an **ominous door** and the **"contract table"**.

Whoever you revived first for your journey - **Suleidy** or **Toya** - will re-enact the signing of the contract by stabbing the dagger into the table. This breaks one of the chains sealing the door. The meaning behind the riddle becomes clear: "Five chains for five crew."

There's more to discover here. We'll see what answers New Krucbury holds.

Off to New Krucbury then

Shiver me timbers!

Crew Tales will shiver yer timbers!

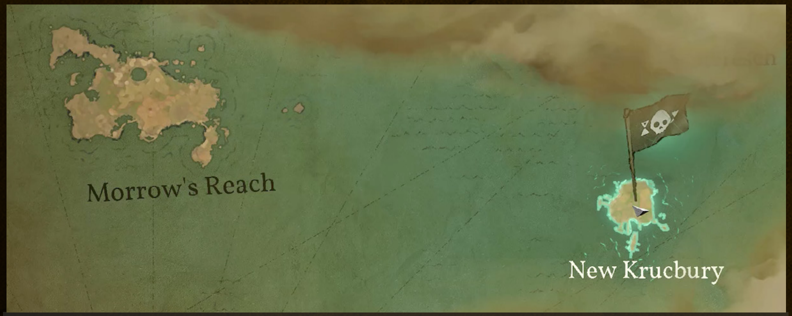
! Crew Tales Unlocked

Each crewmate has their own optional Crew Tale on the Marley that we won't spoil with this guide. In these tales you will learn more about their personality, role on the Marley and relationships with other crewmates. You can complete one step of any available Crew Tale between each mission.

3a - Fragments on New Krucbury

Main Goal: Someone at **New Krucbury** knows the **Captain's riddle**. Steal the secret for yourselves.

Time of day: Night **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 2 **Required:** **Afia**
Rewards: More on the secret of the **Captain's Riddle**. **Soul Energy**

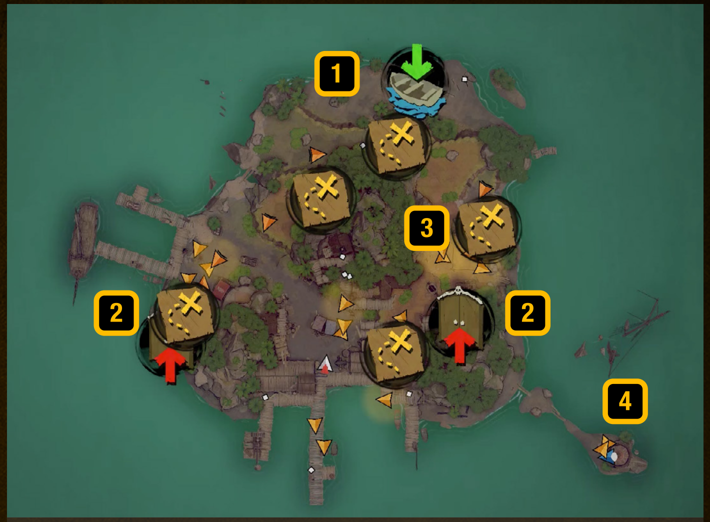


Next stop not too far away

Check with the location portraits in this guide for more details on any of the islands, but here's the short version for **New Krucbury**: It's only a small trade post in the middle of the **Timeless Shores**, but it lately became heavily frequented by **guards and intelligence of the Inquisition** who examine **cursed items and relics** here delivered from across the **Shores**. All in hope of finding answers to the **Captain's riddle**. And this is what we are all looking for.

Someone from **Ignacia's lackeys** had been entrusted with the **Captain's riddle**. But who is it exactly? The first objective is to listen to "**Echoes of the Past**", which is possible by getting to the **memory fragments** scattered across the **island**. Spy on the past to find your target in the present.

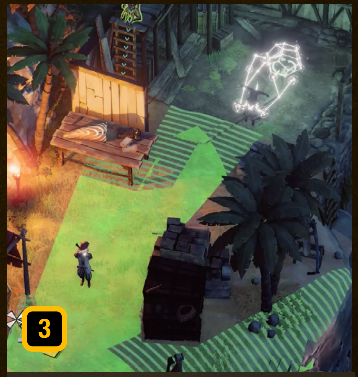
Like in the previous mission on **Morrow's Reach** you simply have one **landing point [1]**. But now you have two **Tears in the Below [2]** that you can choose from in order to make it back to the **Marley**. On the map you also see the **locations of the five memory fragments** marked with a map icon. **Collect four of the five** and you know enough. You learn that the **Magistratus** at **[3]** has been entrusted with the **Riddle** by **Ignacia**. We also learn about the **relics** and that the **Iudex** and the **Magistratus** located here inspect each of them incoming until they find the "right ones".



The mission map

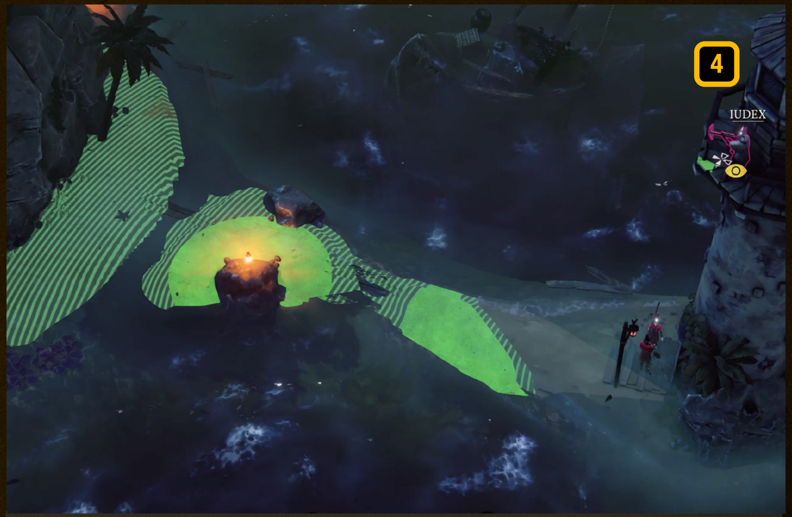
The night protects you quite well on your **path across the island**, but it is surely crowded in the essential parts of your mission, offering quite a challenge when it comes to eliminating the **Magistratus** and the **Iudex** in the second, final part of the mission. Especially the place surrounding the **Magistratus [3]** is quite the **setup**. The rules of play again: Don't be impatient, take your time to distract **guards**, isolate them, take out **one guard after the other** if necessary. If you feel stuck and a certain setup seems too difficult, just try another path and direction.

1 of 5 memory fragments



Magistratus and a Tear

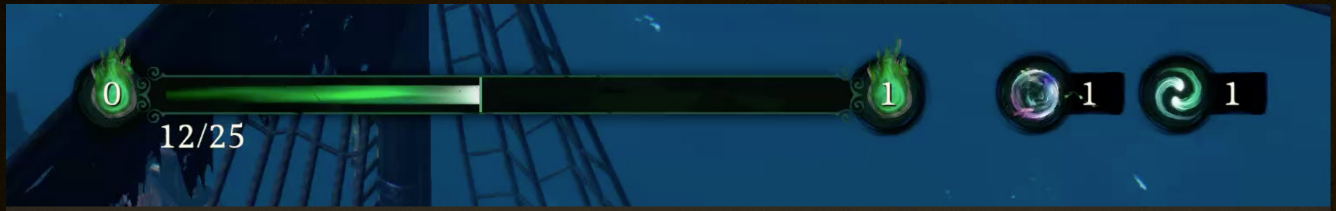
Dealing with the **Iudex** located on top of a **lighthouse [4]** is an easier exercise if you come in two. **Afia** can use her **Blink ability** to get through the **Iudex's** signature viewcone as a sharpshooter. **Suleidy** or **Toya** - depending on who you revived first - are both able to swim and make it to the **entrance of the lighthouse** undetected. Use **Shadow Mode** to take out the two **Acolytes** guarding it. Once you get behind the back of the **Iudex**, it's a piece of cake to get rid of him and you hear **Mordechai's riddle** in his own voice: *"Five of Marley's crew assemble. Relics lost on timeless shores. One of bark and cursed bramble. One of black and ashen ores. One of bone and fingers cold. One of futures yet untold. Bring to light the captain's gambit. Behind Marley's secret doors."*



The Iudex's huge viewcone

Marley also tells you to bring the **riddle slab** as **Soul Energy** can be extracted from it, making way to finally revive a **second crew member**. Make your way to **one of the Tears [2]** and get back to the **Marley**. This opens up the game to a **second act** with **four new islands** to discover and visit...

The Red Marley - A New Crew Member and Islands Ahead



Look up to the stats

Back on the ship you let **Afia** talk to **Marley**. With the **stone slab** dripping with **Soul Energy**, **Marley** draws it out as a present from the **Captain**. This means that you have **1 Black Pearl** and **1 Soul Energy** ready **for reviving another member of the Cursed Crew** breaking another chain on the ominous door below deck. Also look at how much **Vigor** you've collected already. Once the bar is filled, you are free to **upgrade one of your crew member's signature skills**, making it even more powerful.

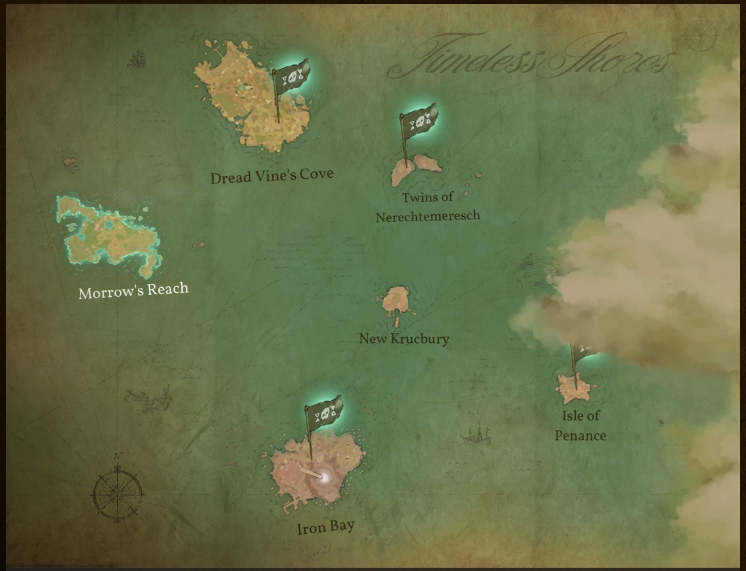
Marley will be occupied with pondering out the **secrets of the riddle** leaving you with the decision who's next in line. Go for it. Play the tutorial missions for the **character you've picked**. Learn the basics for single character play here and master it for **teamplay** on missions. This is the way.

! Who's next in line for the Crew?

This guide won't tell you which characters to pick in sequence for your personal journey through the Seas, of course. All characters are great, have their strengths and weaknesses that you can balance out with teamplay. That's what the game is all about. You cannot do anything wrong as each and every mission is completely doable with any member of the Cursed Crew you pick for landing on an island. In the game just look at the character sheets you find attached to their bones or go through the in-depth character portraits in this guide. What's your playstyle, your preference?

Do whatever you want to do on top or **deck or below deck** while you're on the **Marley**. For as long as you please. There's no hurry. Inspect the **ship**, discover secrets, play some **Crew Tales**...

For what lies ahead and will be covered in this overview mission guide, the **map just revealed some new islands** at this point in the game. There are **four new islands** for you and the **Cursed Crew** to discover through missions. You can do these missions in almost any order now. One mission on **Dread Vine's Cove** will only unlock once you've finished two others before first. We will visit this island for this guide first.



Four new islands to discover

Inspect the **map**, the location intro videos you find in the game, read the mission intros. Consult the **Island portraits** in this guide. That gives you a good overview of what to expect on **each and every island**, the missions you encounter there and also what missions you have to play in order to **unlock further missions and even whole islands**.

Note that you don't have to follow the particular sequence of missions that this guide might suggest. That being said, each mission set on an island has an **"identifier"** in this guide. Like the next mission with **"4a"**. The number will tell you what **island** (4 = **Dread Vine's Cove**) and the letter which mission from the list (a = **"Bark and Bramble"**). This will help you identify missions more easily in context of this guide and locate them right on the map.

4a - Bark and Bramble on Dread Vine's Cove

Main Goal: The **Dread Vine** guards one of **Mordechai's relics**. Convince it to hand it over.

Time of day: Day **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

Rewards: **Soul Energy** **Dread Vine's Bark**

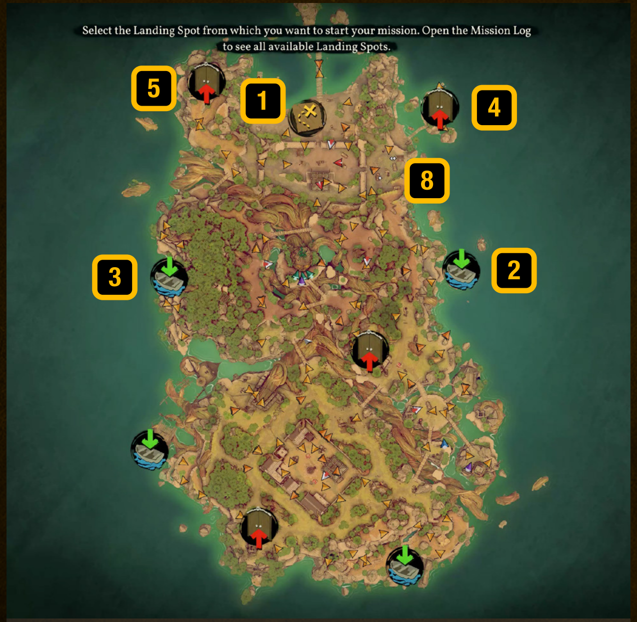
Three of Five to go

No matter which **island** you pick next, playing though them all (minus 1) will either grant you **1 Black Pearl** or **1 Soul Energy**. So playing through these islands of this **"Second Act" on your journey** will probably bring you pretty close to the **solving of the Captain's Riddle** and the "Five of Marley's crew". You've already revived **two members of the Cursed Crew** at this stage with three more to follow on your course across the **Timeless Shores** with **Dread Vine's Cove**, **Iron Bay**, **Isle of Penance** and **Twins of Nerechtemeresch**.

As already said, we will set foot on **Dread Vine's Cove** first for this guide and start with the mission **"Bark and Bramble"**. Give you some glimpse of the key moments and challenges here. Just like we will do for all the missions until you've reached the grand finale of the game. For now it's **relic** hunting, and for this mission we search for the **"Dread Vine's Bark"** known from the **"One of bark and cursed bramble" part of the riddle**. A **relic** hidden on the island by the **Captain**.

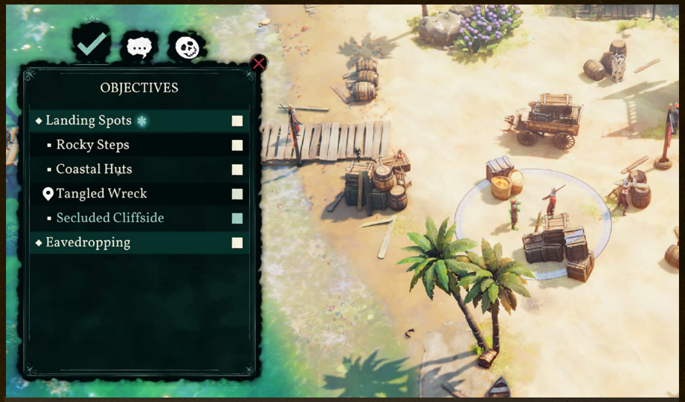
The **Dread Vine** informs us that the **Inquisition** has claimed the **relic** for now and split it in **three parts** not knowing what it was. Also putting it in **three crates** you find at **different locations on the island**. First objective is eavesdropping on a **Commissarius** located at a **beach [1]**.

Pick any **landing spot** you like for your individual path. You are free to choose and enjoy every part of the **island's setups of guards** to find way to the **three crates** and with them the **three parts of the Dread Vine's Bark**.



Select the Landing Spot from which you want to start your mission. Open the Mission Log to see all available Landing Spots.

Island and mission map

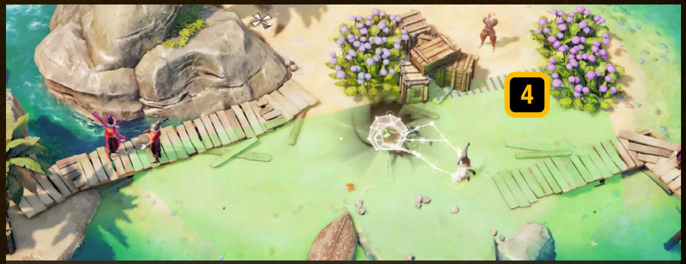


OBJECTIVES

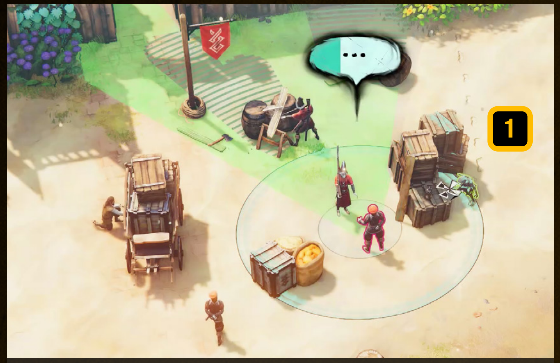
- ◆ Landing Spots ☐
  - ▪ Rocky Steps ☐
  - ▪ Coastal Huts ☐
  - Tangled Wreck ☐
  - ▪ Secluded Cliffside ☐
- ◆ Eavedropping ☐

Listening to the Commissarius first

You initially don't know where the crates are before all the eavesdropping, but choosing a **landing spot** close to the **Commissarius [1]** seems a sound plan anyway, e.g. the **Rocky Steps east [2]** or the **Secluded Cliffside [3]**. The layout is quite symmetrical in the north, both routes offering a **Tear [4]** or **[5]** to open on the way for exit later.



A Tear to open on the way

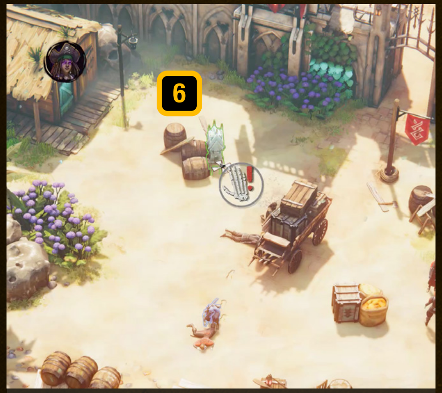


A great spot for eavesdropping

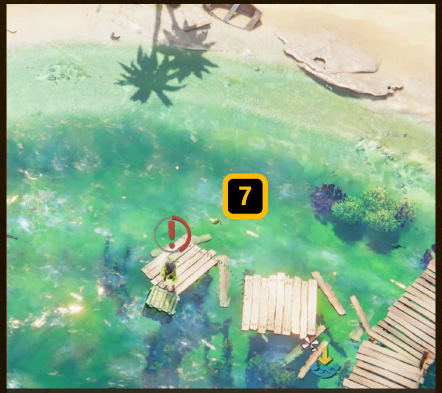
So, head to the **beach [1]** then and start eavesdropping by getting close while staying undetected. Be careful with footprints in the sand as these are easily detected by **guards**. Or use it for advantage. It's can be an **effective distraction** that any character can use to **move** **Acolytes** and **irritate** a **Commissarius**. **Afia** can't do it with that hole and sword in her chest, but either **Suleidy** or **Toya** are **able to swim**, offering much freedom of choice for entering the **beach** wherever you like.

Once you've arrived at the beach, hiding behind that **big pile of crates [1]** seems the perfect spot for listening in and finding out where those **crates** are, containing the **three parts of the relic**. They are not too far away as you find out- They are all placed somewhere in the **area north** where you already are. So you won't have to conquer the whole **island**.... yet.

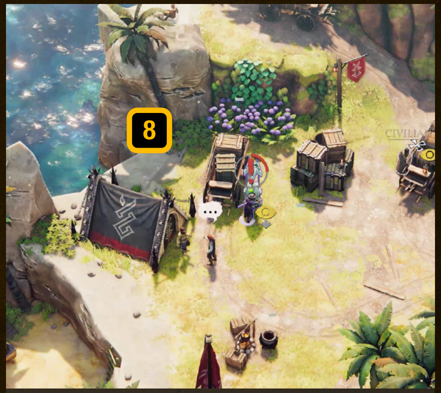
Two pieces of the bark had been put into so-called "Armariums", right at the **beach [1] at [6]** and another one at a **convoy a bit south-east at [8]**. The third, more simple crate is **floating in the ocean [7] close to the beach [1]**. How easy it is to get to these spots truly depends on how thoroughly you've already cleared the way, i.e. with how many of the **guards** still up and alive.



One at the Beach

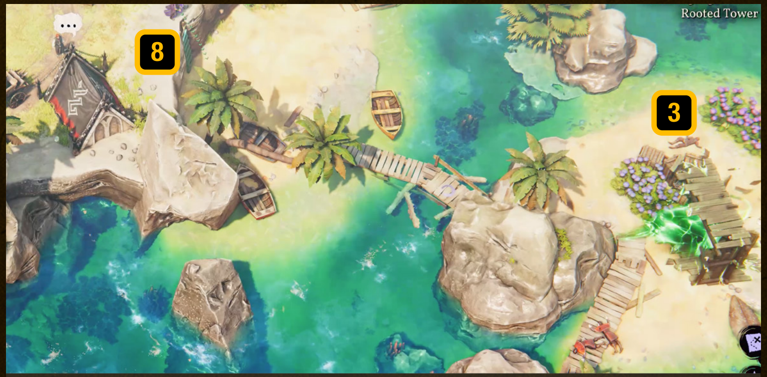


One floating in the water



One at the Convoy

Once the **three pieces of the relic** have been retrieved and reassembled - they snap together like magic - we're done here for now. Find your way to **one of the Tears** - one is close to the **Convoy [8]** on the **Little Island [3]**.



An exit for the Marley close by

You can't prepare you're next visit to **Dreadvine's Cove** too much by doing anything further. **Guards** will be "restocked" for the next mission. But you are, of course, always free to look around and use **Dread Vine's Cove** or **any other island on your journey** as you're personal training ground. It's still early in the game.

Back on the **Marley**, the **Soul Energy** will be savoured from the **relic**, leaving **1 Black Pearl** for another revive yet to collect. The **Trickster** of Italian descent will reveal his name as **Virgilio** in another appearance, this time right on the **Red Marley**. Have a chat with him and also learn about **Afia's** motivations in her undead life, building a reputation as a pirate by finding **Mordechai's Treasure**. Relax some more with **Crew Tales** and then set the course to the next **island** and **mission** from the **map table on the Marley**. For this guide we stick with **Dread Vine's Cove**, but remember that you are free to choose wherever you want to go next. Visit the more bleak **Isle of Penance** next for a mood changer, if you like.

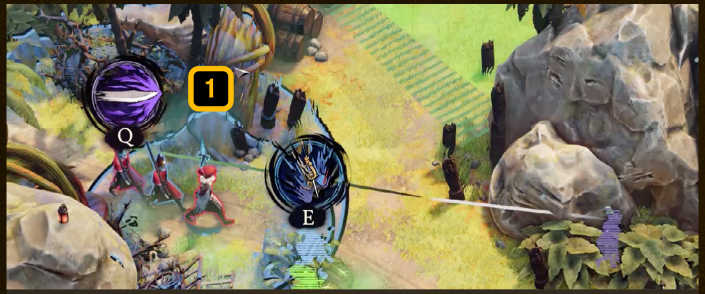
4b - Haggling With A Plant on Dread Vine's Cove

Main Goal: The **Dread Vine** has a **Black Pearl** in possession. Perhaps it can be bargained with?

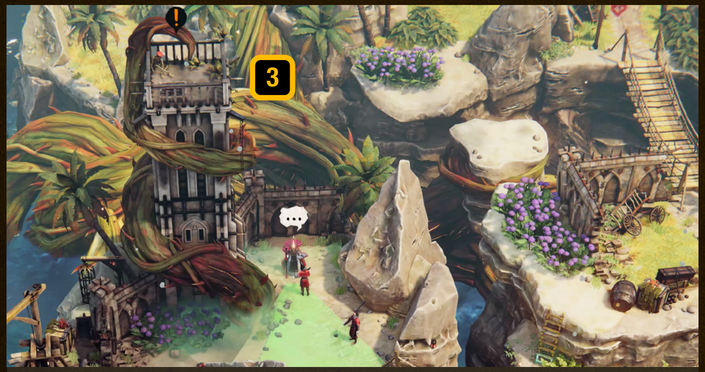
Time of day: Day **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

Rewards: **Black Pearl**

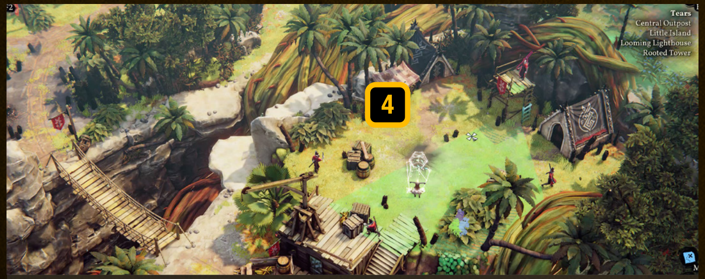
Getting the **Black Pearl** involves a bargain with the **Dread Vine**. Getting rid of a **Magistratus** will be the first thing you have to do in order to get the eldritch plant to negotiate at all. With the **Magistratus** patrolling in the area **[1]**, we now have business to the **south of Dread Vine's Cove**. Picking a **landing point** close would be convenient. The **Coastal Huts [2]** probably as the top pick. Making your way up from there involves some **minor setups of guards**. Pretty soon you can see the **Magistratus** and his **two Acolytes on patrol**. Prepare your strike.



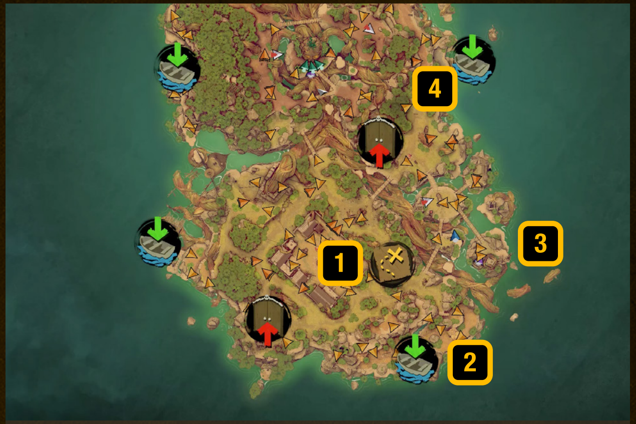
Setting it all up in Shadow Mode



The watchtower and its surroundings



The small arena with the Tear at the Central Outpost



The relevant part of the map for this mission

This strike best involves **Shadow Mode** with a **patrol of three guards** you have to take out at once. Use the environment for hiding and planning this strike. Definitely set **Blink** to one of the guards with **Afia**. She's not required for this mission, but you still lack alternatives, right? If you have **Suleidy** with you, plant a bush with **Cover Seeds** to get close(r) to the action. Use **Toya's Katashiro** either for marking the **Magistratus** directly or as trap on the **patrol's** route. Depends who's with you. With two actions set to **"Execute" in Shadow Mode**, you can easily take out the third guard with your own sense for manual timing.

The **Dread Vine** will then negotiate, but only with some pressure added by **Afia**. You're then directed towards a hard to reach **tower roof [3]** where you find the **Black Pearl**. It is pretty close fortunately, but a terrifying **Prognosticar** is guarding the **entrance**. With all **other guards** already taken out at this spot, it would be possible to make a move at him. But just try to sneak up the **rooted tower [3]**. Your way is across **bridges** and **setups** in that **area**, but you will manage by paying close attention to the viewcones.

Once you've snatched the **Black Pearl**, make your way to one of the **Tears**. The one at **[4]** certainly being the closest. It involves a rather enjoyable **last setup of guards**. Take out the **Custodes guard** and head back to the **Marley**, where you can now revive a **third member of the crew** adding up to **four characters** ready for **teamplay** excellence!

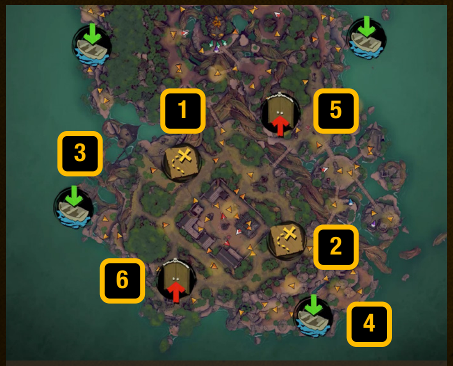
4c - Fruits of Her Labour on Dread Vine's Cove

Main Goal: Vile experiments are being conducted on **Dread Vine's Cove**. Uncover **Ingnacia's** intent.

Time of day: Night **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3, **Afia** not allowed

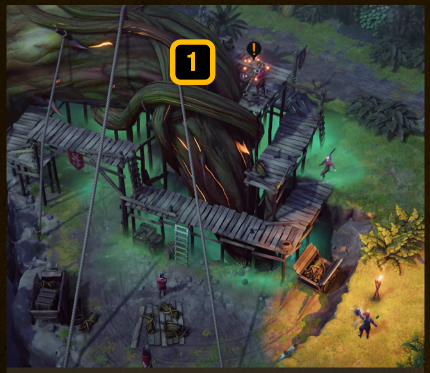
Rewards: Obligatory for progression

Completing **"Haggling With a Plant"** unlocks a third mission on **Dread Vine's Cove**. **Ignacia** recently arrived on the **island** and is conducting some sort of ritual, we are told by the **Marley**. Better find out what she's up to. Could be some new method to "haunt" the **crew**. We are also told that **Afia** has to stay **on the ship** for once, coordinating the **crew** from afar as an experiment. This means that the **three of your crewmates** who have already been revived will build the team for this return to **Dread Vine's Cove**.

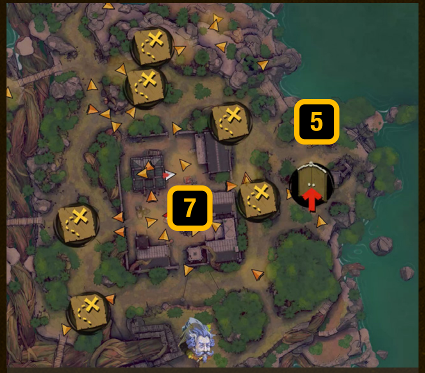


Your options and first objectives

Approaching the **island** by night, **Ignacia** has already left, although **Afia** can still feel her presence. So does the **Dread Vine** quite literally after being tortured by **Ignacia**, her ripping out pieces, probing and twisting them in her private study, then grafting those pieces back on the **Dread Vine's roots**. It won't tell what this is all about, but it wants the **crew** to take those graftings away. There are two of them, at **[1]** and **[2]**, both located close to a **fortification** in the **south's center**. We can pick either of them for our **first objective**. Again the map layout is quite symmetrical, so we can easily pick a **landing spot** to our liking at **[3]** or **[4]**, then later exit through a **Tear** either a bit to the **north [5]** or **south [6]**. We go for the **"Tangled Wreck" [3]** here as the starting point making our way to the **root [1]**. At **either location [1] or [2]** you will have to deal with **some tricky setups of guards** that are however not too demanding at this still early stage of the game.



One of the roots

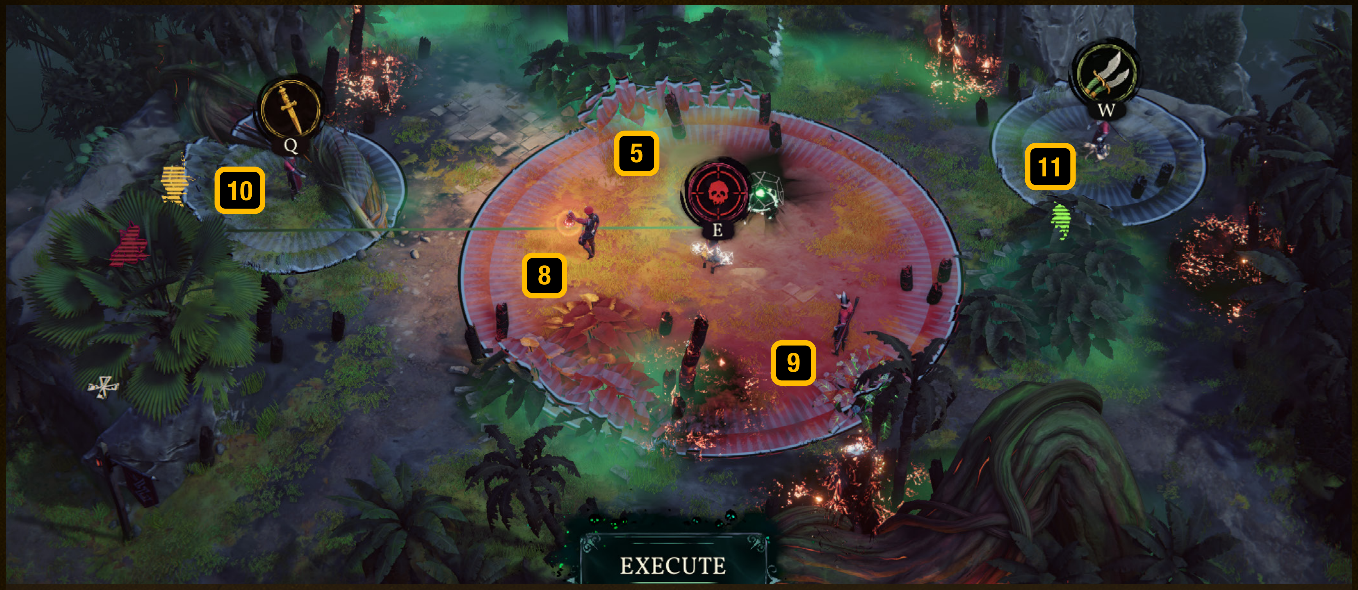


Memory fragments

One of the fragments close up

Freeing either root from **Ignacia's** graftings will make the wound "bleed" out **six memory fragments** you then find scattered across the **island**. Choose three of them on a path you prefer by inspecting the **guard setups**. Much like the **roots** at **[1]** and **[2]** the **fragments** are all located close to the **fortification [7]**, where the finale of this mission will eventually take place. Choosing the **two memory fragments in the area [5]**, where there's also a **Tear**, is some clever idea. Good thing to prepare your possible exit right at this stage of the **mission**.

The **Tear at [5]** is heavily watched by a **patrolling Commissarius** and **three stationary Acolyte guards**. You can easily take these out by **setting up melee attacks in Shadow Mode** while hiding in the **bushes** there. Or you could just **blow them away** with your **Flintlock Pistols**. Even if the **Commissarius** calls alarm, no one will hear it anymore and you can **take him out "manually"**. But here's another ideas to try: You can **go straight for the Custodes** at **[5]** and **use the area of damage when breaking the seal** to your advantage. This way you can take out the **patrolling Commissarius [8]**, **one of the Acolytes [9]** and the **Custodes** in a **single coordinated attack move**. Something ranged like **Teresa's Iron Judgement** is certainly ideal, but there are other options that will work with the right timing. The **other crewmates** cover the **other Acolytes [10]** and **[11]**. Great move!



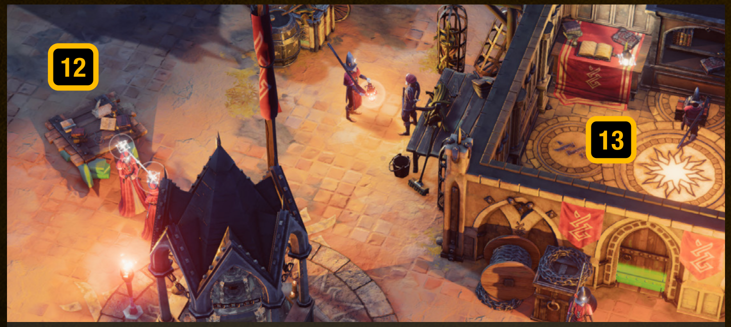
One strike taking down all in Shadow Mode

Exit prepared and **three fragments** examined, the way to the **mission finale** is open. The actual way into the **fortification [7]** not quite. An **intricate setup of guards** awaits and blocks your way to a **key** you have to steal from a **table right in the middle at [12]**. It will grant access to a **chest** in **Ignacia's private study**.

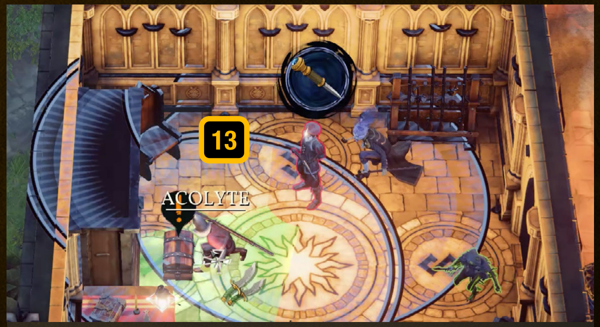
But **not** even **Quentin** would be able to **snatch the key** from a distance with his **Treasure Rod**. **Two Kindred Sisters among other guards** protect the **key** well. No trying to even sneak your way there and snatch it from behind the table. You have to deal with the **guards including the Kindred**. Luckily, most of the **other guards** are **Acolytes** and luring them to hidden spots with **position mover distractions** like **Quentin's Golden Head** or **Toya's Bird's Voice** will be of great use here.

When all **guards** watching are gone outside, take the key from the table and enter **Ignacia's study [13]**. The **Commissarius** and the **Acolyte** inside have their backs turned to the door, so take them out with **two crewmates** in **Shadow Mode**. Open the **small chest** to find a **Red Orb** containing a memory that **Marley** won't dare to unleash from afar. What we get is a peek and a message from **Ignacia** who already retreated to **Gran Alcázar**. We learn that **Ignacia** took over **Marley's** ability to shape memories and even reshape reality itself. She also had cut off **Mordechai's Head** before burning his soul, on a more cruel and simpler note. Yuck!

Back on the **ship**, **Marley** is pretty "unnerved" by **Ignacia** experimenting with her power and the uncomfortable link she has with **her and the crew**. A splendid time to relax with some **Crew Tales** before setting sail to the next **island** of choice on the map, hunting **Black Pearls** and draining **Soul Energy** from **relics**. The **"Five of Marley's Crew"** have to be gathered for solving the **Captain's Riddle**, paving the way to finding his **Treasure**.



Table, key, study and chest



The last two guard before the chest

5a - Bone and Fingers on the Isle of Penance

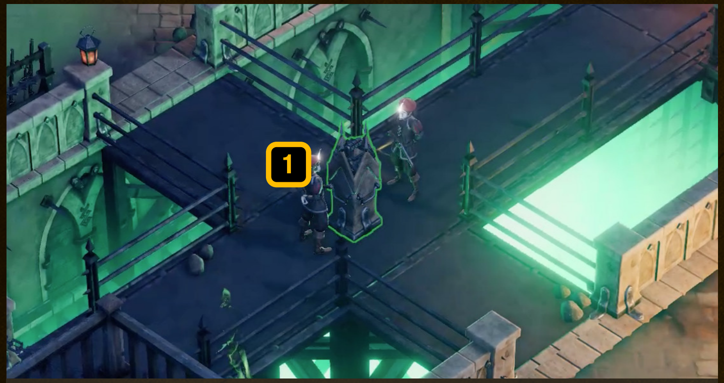
Main Goal: An **old associate** lies imprisoned here, who knows the secret to one of **Mordechai's relics**.

Time of day: Night **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

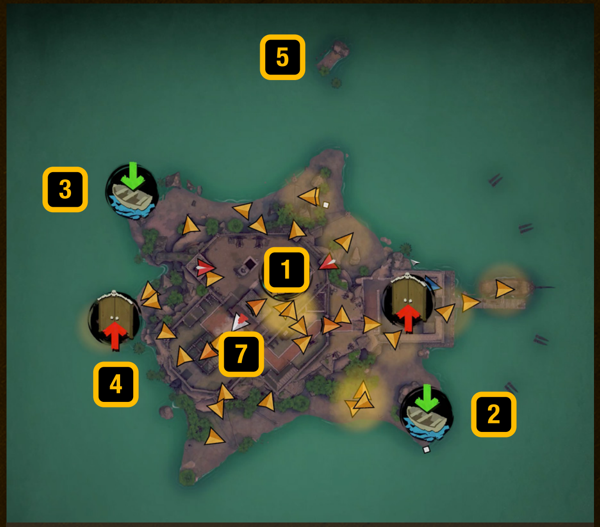
Rewards: One step closer to solving the **Captain's Riddle**. **Soul Energy** **Mordechai's Hand**

Together with **Ignacia**, **Captain Mordechai's cut-off head** has to wait for our coming to **Gran Alcázar**, setting up the mid-game climax with two missions there. For now, we still have other business. How about **"Bone and Fingers"**? This **mission** leads us to the **Isle of Penance**. Years ago, an old acquaintance of the **Captain** was imprisoned here. Her name was **Bonefinger Barb**, which rings a bell with **Marley**: **"One of bone and fingers cold"** is the hint from the **Captain's Riddle** bringing the **crew** to this **prison island for the souls**.

We have to make our way from one of **the landing spots** at the **island's nightly beaches** all the way up to the **"energy reliquium" [1]** on top of the prison. This is where we have our chance of meeting and talking to **Bonefinger Barb**.

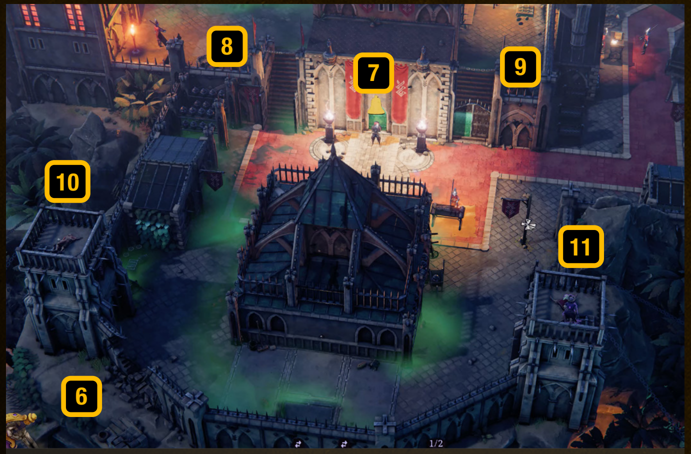


The energy reliquium



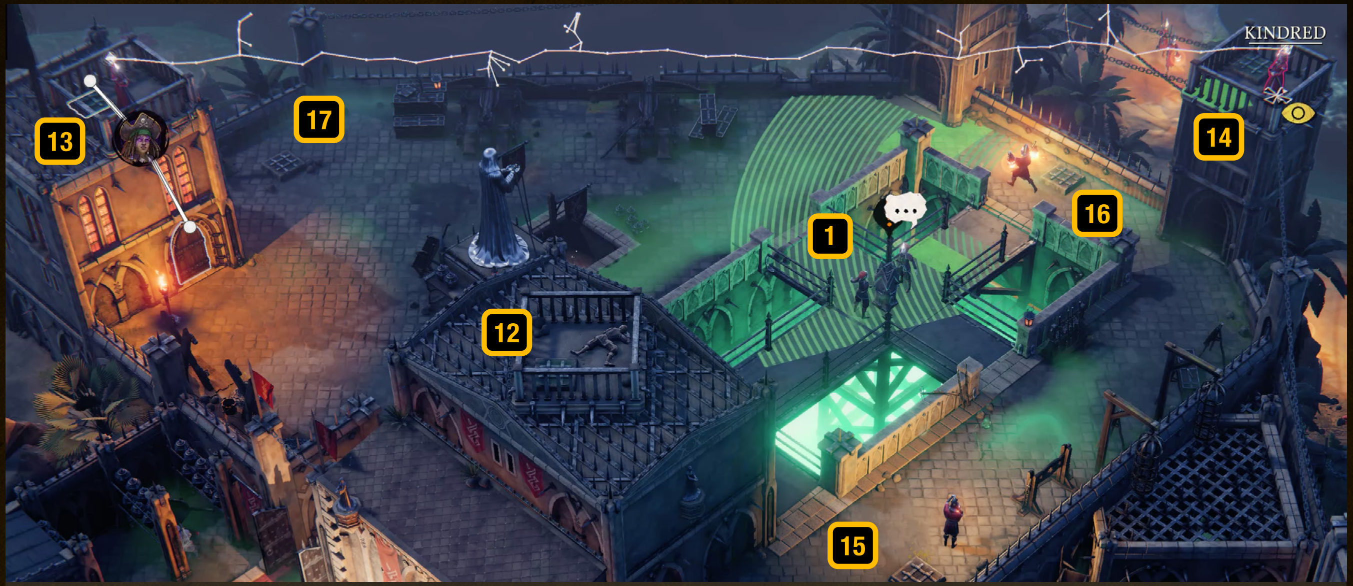
Mission map

The **island** itself is quite small and you can't do much wrong selecting any of the **two landing spots [1] or [2]**. Running along the **beaches** will make a lot of sense for finding an **entry point to the prison**, even though you have to be careful with footprints in the sand being detected by **guards**. **Swimming** is a plus here. There's also a **Tear at [3]** that is fairly reachable for **exit via water and beaches**. There's also a **huge rock** that you can push down on **guards** taking a break staring at the sea. It is possible to hit both of them using **distractions skills**.



Your first area to reach

You find **cracks in the outside walls** of the **prison** that aren't even well protected, like **[6]**. This allows you to enter the **small fortress** after climbing **several ladders** that you find all **along the rocks of the fortification**. Alternatively you can enter through **"official" entries**. No matter where, you have to deal with some **guards on patrol** and **others just standing** and even **sitting around**. Choose the path according to your preferred playstyle and **guard setups** you like. No matter what route you take, they all should end somehow in the **yard [7]** with **two staircases [8] and [9]** leading up to our **objective [1]**. Watch out for any **guards "towering" above**. In the **yard [7]** it starts easy with **Acolytes at [10] and [11]** not seeing each other. Means that you can take them out each with single force one after the other.

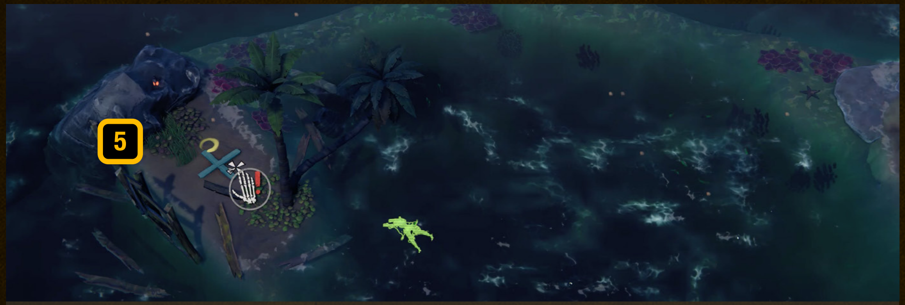


Soul Prison top floor

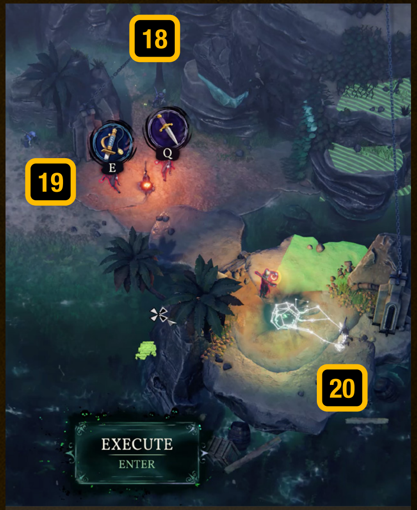
Once you've cleared the **yard [7]**, including the **Commissarius** guarding the **door of the building**, make sure to get to the roof where another **Commissarius [12]** overlooks the top level **area**. Take him or her out. Do not enter the **area** through **that building's door** as you will be spotted instantly. Use the **stairs** instead.

Now upstairs in the **area** where the **energy reliquium [1]** is kept, you have another **watchtower** situation at **[13] and [14]**. There are again **two guards** you have to take care of, but this time they're set up with **Kindred Sisters** overlooking the **area**. Still no pair of **ludexes** covering the area like later in the game, but the one at **[14]** watches the **reliquium**. A call for **simultaneous action**. Done that, clear the area from **further guards**, use the **hatches [15], [16] and [17]** for secretly moving **beneath the floor**. When only the two **Commissarius** remain that are guarding the **reliquium at [1]**, use **Shadow Mode** for a strike, then free **Bonefinger Barb**.

Bonefinger (or her soul) will point you to a **small islet [5]** where she hid the **relic** for **Captain Mordechai**, knowing that one day **Red Marley** will come looking for it when he's already been long gone. **X marks the spot at [5]**. Splendid! Leave the **fortress** on the path you came and already cleared from **guards**, then either swim to the **islet** or walk there. Dig up the chest containing **Mordechai's Hand** he'd famously lost in **Port Royal**.



The small treasure islet



A Tear for exit

Get back to the **Marley** using **one of the Tears** for exit. The **one at [4]** is close by. Deal with the **lingering guards** there while watching the **patrolling guard's viewcone** near the **Tear**. You can climb up and push that **rock** above for at least killing one of them, waiting for the others leaving their post for investigating that terrible accident, then strike again. Or use **Shadow Mode** like in **[19]**. And also remember that shooting the **Custodes [20]** from afar with someone like **Teresa** will also take out the **patrolling guard**. Play with all you have. Always.

6a - Prepare for Trouble on Twins of the Nerechtemeresch

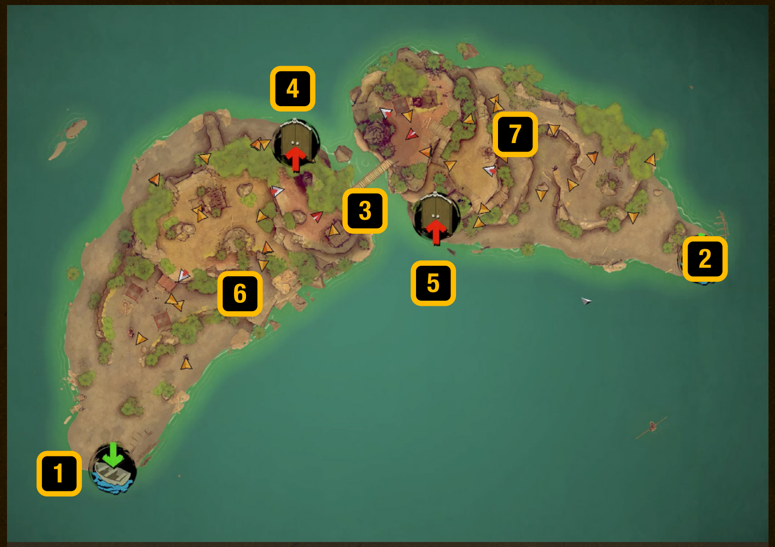
Main Goal: The **Twins** might be convinced to part with their **Black Pearl**, if they can be reasoned with at all.

Time of day: Day **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

Rewards: **Black Pearl**

Back on the **ship** and with the **Soul Energy** drained from the **Captain's severed hand**, you'd immediately want to set sail to the **Twins of the Nerechtemeresch**. Try to get that **Black Pearl** from the **notoriously twisted twin siblings** haunting that **twin island** in order to revive the **fourth** of **"Marley's Crew"**, leaving only one further **crew member** for solving the **Captain's Riddle**, breaking that last chain of the door and see what's behind it. Before going to the **map table** though, always inspect whether you have collected enough **Vigor** already for **upgrading one of your characters' signature skills**. If yes, then **pick the one that you consider to best fit your preferences in playstyle** judging from what you've played so far. Or perhaps a skill upgrade makes a particular skill more attractive that you've shunned a bit. In general, keep your maintenance up while you're on the ship. **Virgilio** also might have already made a first appearance on the **ship** by now...

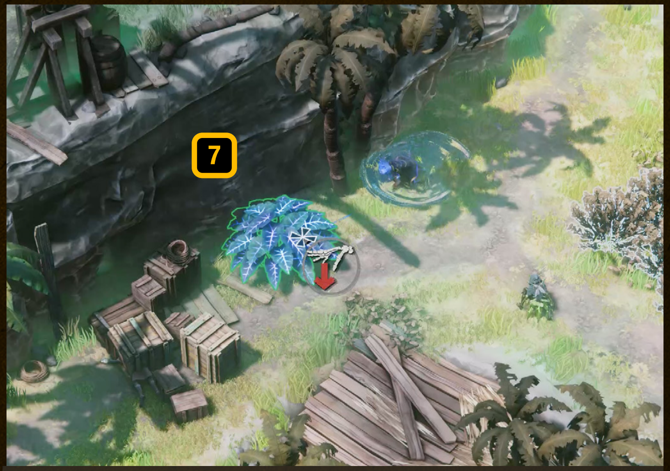
Arriving at the **Twins of the Nerechtemeresch**, you already expect the proper briefing for the mission. Here we go: The **Marley** expects the **Twins** to notice the **crew** immediately after setting foot on one of its **beautiful beaches**. Her advise is to play along with all they say and want or you won't see the end of it. So let's see what they have for us then, other than that **Black Pearl** we came for. Play along...



Mission map of the twin islands

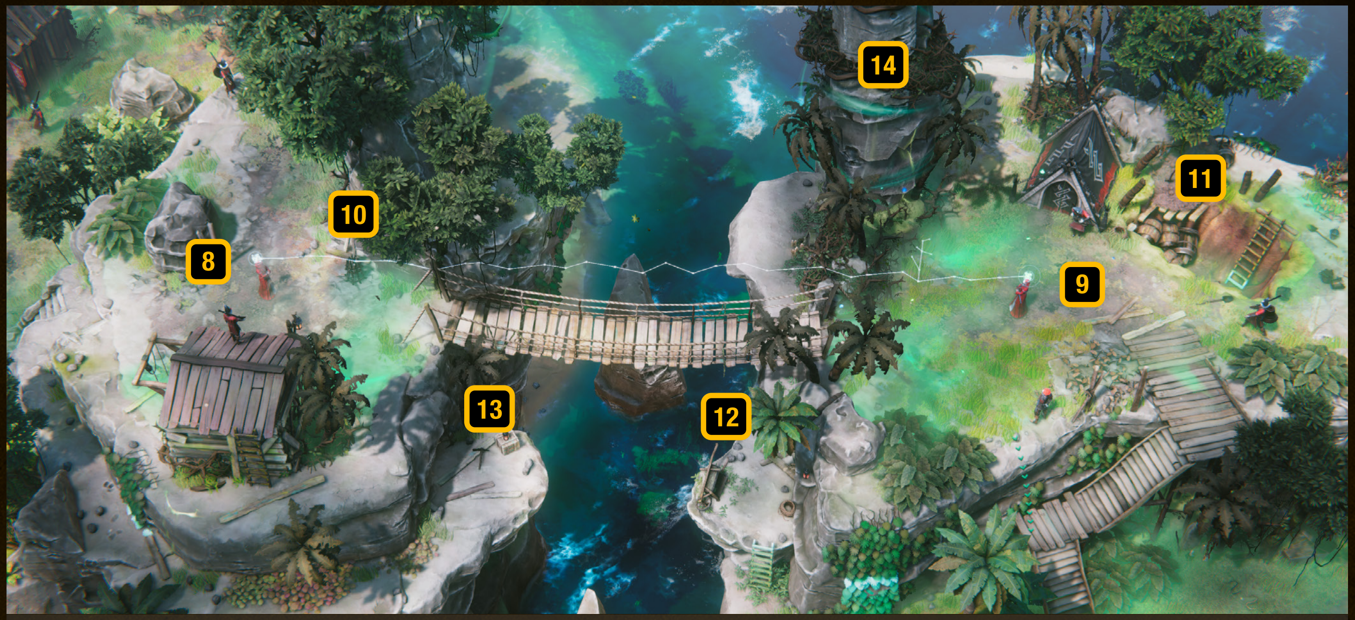
Selecting any of the **two available landing spots** named **Nerech [1]** and **Temeresch [2]** will take you to the picturesque **beaches** first. From there you work your way up to that **bridge [3]** connecting **both parts of the island**. Looking also at the **Tears in the Below at [4] and [5]**, the symmetrical layout here is apparent. Choose any **landing spot** you like after you've inspected geography and **guard setups**.

The first idea for entertainment that the **Twins** propose is putting some of those **robed puppets** into **two special bushes** you find on the **island**: a **Red Bush** located in the **western part Nerech [6]** and a **Blue Bush** in the **eastern part Temeresch [7]**. Hiding **guards** now has an additional purpose. You will likely go for the **one magical bush that's on your respective part**, of course. The **Twins** will get bored after doing this with **three guard bodies**.



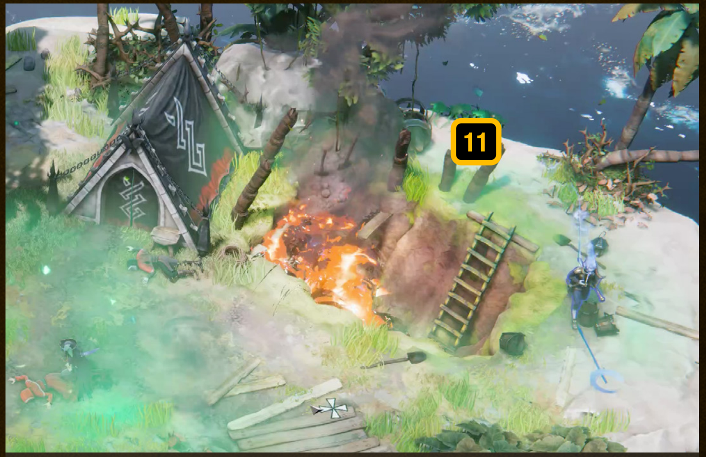
Dispose of your bodies here, Pinkus

What's next for entertainment then? Burn something. And this will bring you to the **top of the mountain**, right to that **bridge [3]**. The path is well protected by **guards** and the **bridge** itself by **Kindred Sisters [8] and [9]**. The **Inquisition** apparently made them specialize in protecting **bridges**. There's a **torch [10]** and a **pit [11]** there. This will do the trick.



The connecting bridge

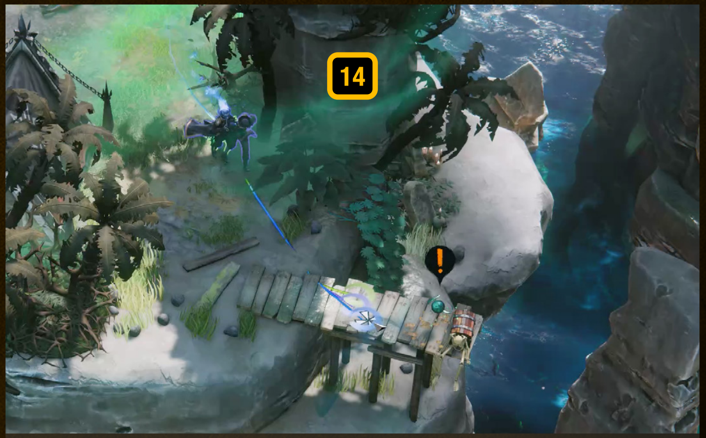
Crossing that **bridge** is impossible without being detected at least by the **Kindred**. Inspect the environment closely for support and you find a **"magical link" between the island parts** that is no ordinary **bridge** like the one above. Enter the **cave entrances [12]** or **[13]** and find yourself teleported right to the other one located across the **chasm**. Use this for clever logistics and apply all **strategies of "distract-isolate-reduce"** for clearing the area before you take out the **Kindred** in **Shadow Mode**. Pick up the **torch [10]** and burn the stuff the **Inquisition** has put in the **pit [11]**.



Pinkus being quite the pyromaniac

The **Twins** will be pleased by the spectacle and willing to hand over the **Black Pearl**. You find it at the **"plank that reaches far above the water"**. In another literal twist you simply have to rotate the camera to find the spot (or use the list of objectives for that matter). It's right **behind that rock pillar [14]**. Grab it until the **Twins** change their mind, **Marley** says.

Then exit the **island** through any of the **two Tears in the Below**. Take the path back from where you came or take another route and have more fun with **guards** already waiting for you.



Black Pearl at the plank

Back on the **ship**, with the **Black Pearl** in hand and maybe **Soul Energy** available, you are able to revive the **fourth member of the crew**. That is if you decided on an **alternating sequence of Black Pearl and Soul Energy missions**. Do that for unlocking **additional crewmates** as soon as possible. But its still up to you, which mission you go for next in this **second act**.

6a - Snatched From the Pit at the Iron Bay

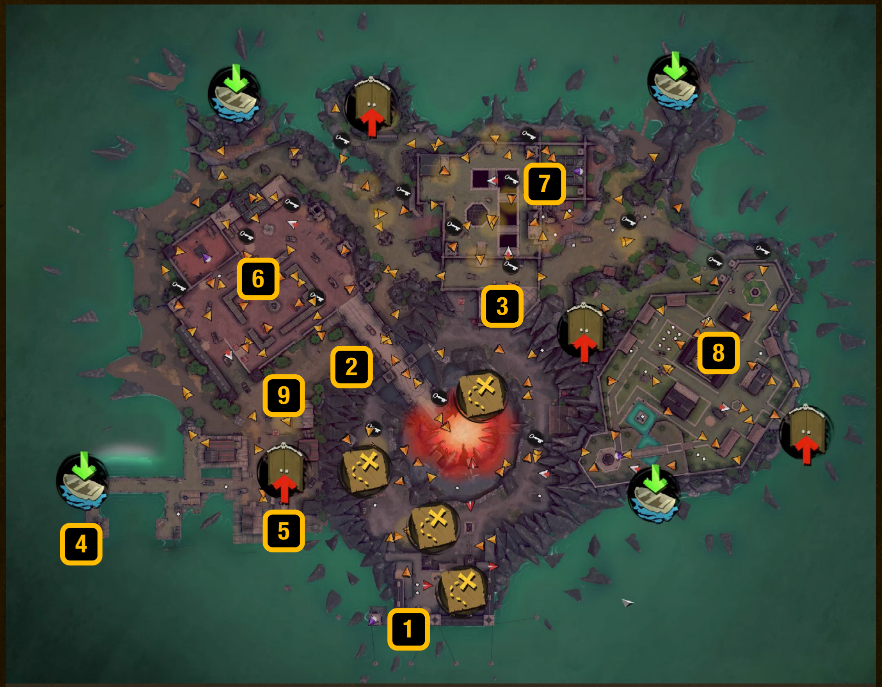
Main Goal: A Black Pearl was delivered to the Iron Bay. Let's grab it before they destroy it.

Time of day: Night   Duration: Long   Vigor Boost: 3   Crew Size: 3

Rewards: Black Pearl

Next island on the map is the Iron Bay, a dense location with a lot of guards around. It's a huge playground and certainly among the biggest sandbox locations you find in the game. Impossible to deal with all possible paths and setups you find there.
We start at night with "Snatched From the Pit". To snatch from the pit (at the center of the island) is a Black Pearl, but not exactly as it is in the hands of a Prognosticar [1], taken to the smelters, to be encased in iron. Simply hurling the Pearl in the pit would burn each and every soul on the island, we hear Marley saying. So [1] is our destination and prime objective: Snatch the Pearl from the Prognosticar's table. For making this easier, we are advised to consider the optional objective and set something on fire for distraction right before that. After "Prepare For Trouble" on the Twins of the Nerechtemeresch the crew apparently found joy in burning things.

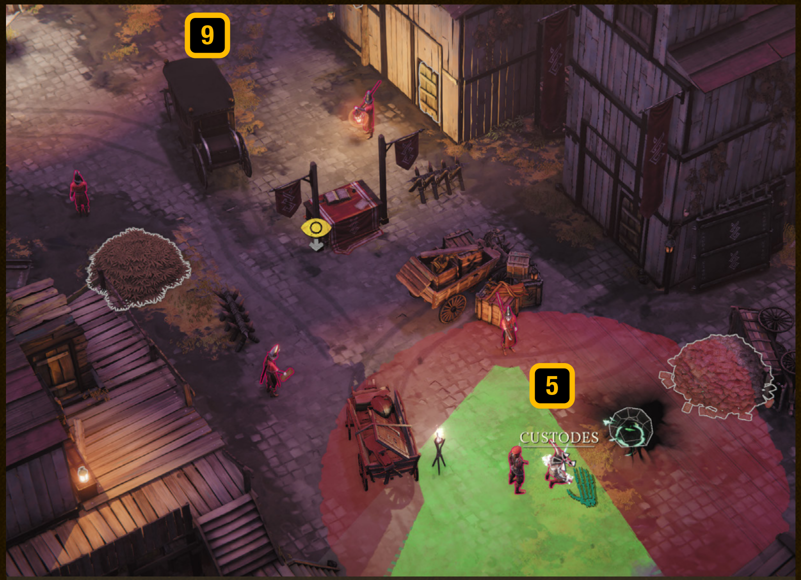
But let's first find a way in there. The options you have are already laid out in the briefing: There's a ladder at [3] that offers a path once you enter the isle from the landing points in the north, which you can, of course. But focus lies on areas to the south [1] right now. West [6] in focus for the other mission "Ash and Ore" here. The Captain's Test questlines for Teresa and Quentin will have dedicated missions taking place in both areas [7] and [8] in the third act.
We go for landing spot [4] for both missions in this guide. You will have to "conquer" the bridge to the pit in area [2] in both. For "Snatched From the Pit" we will descent from that bridge through the doorways, get to the bottom and head to our objective [1]. Another good thing with this path is the Tear in the Below at [5] that you can open along the way for exit later. Let's go then.



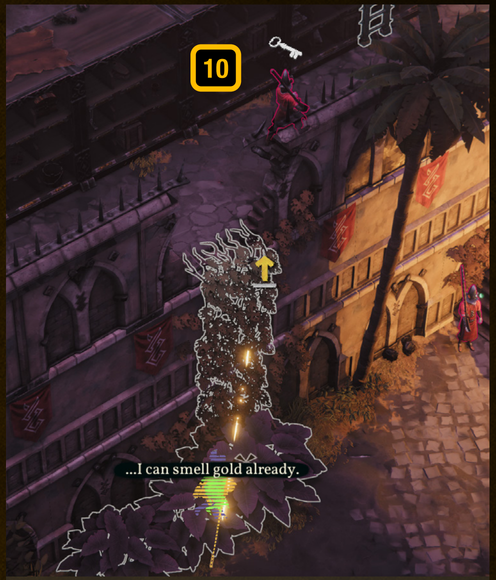
A huge location needs a greater map

Some character advise to think about when it comes to the Iron Bay: There are a lot of locked doors, but also a lot of guards that carry Inquisition keys. With Quentin's Fishing Rod able to snatch such items, he'd be a great crewmate for these missions, in case you've already revived him. Suleidy on the other hand is great for providing cover with Cover Seeds. Very useful in all areas crowded with guards and viewcones. And she's a great position mover, especially if you've decided on her upgrade "Wander Dust, Reverse!".

From landing spot "Grand Docks" [4] you make your way along the jetty, apply the "distract-isolate-reduce" approach and strategy wherever necessary and alternatively sneak through every guard setup you won't care about clearing. Make sure to prepare your exit through the Tear at [5]. Then move on towards the bridge [2] on a path towards [9]. Don't make a wrong turn into area [6]. Go for the key that guard [10] carries. If you decided on Quentin for this mission, quickly snatch it with his Fishing Rod. But you can also tackle that guard and the key with an ivy climber from your crew in no time at [10].

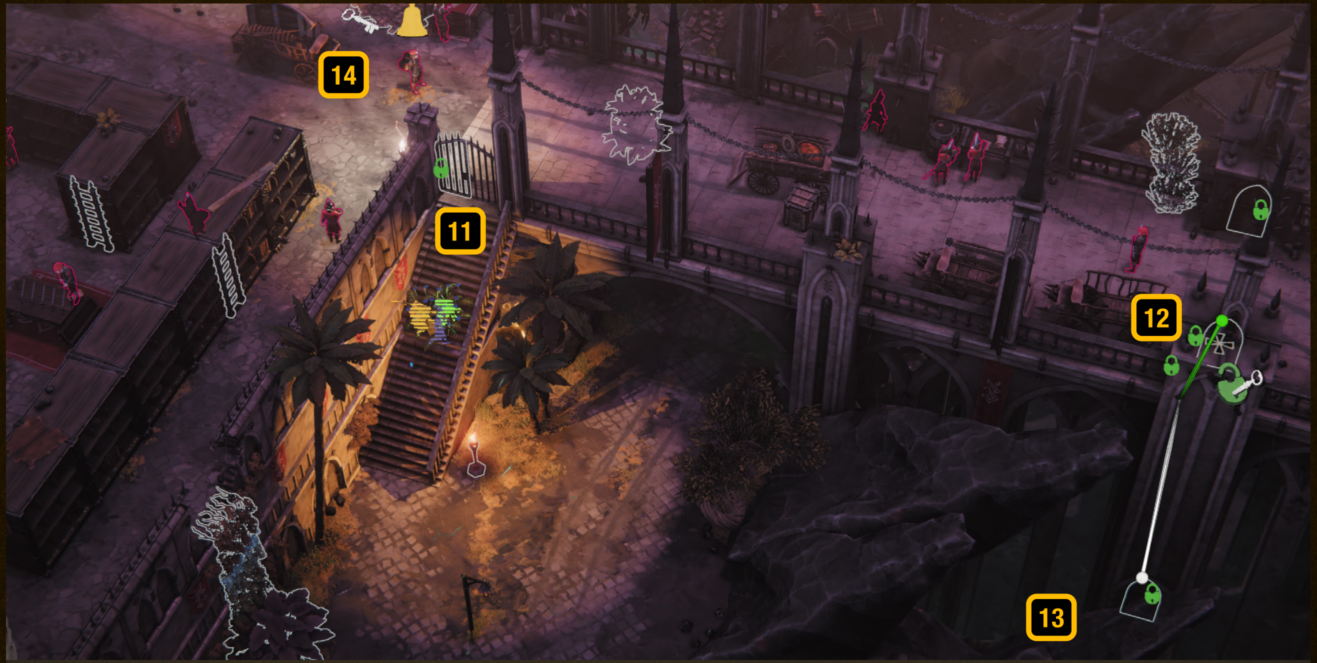


Your exit for later



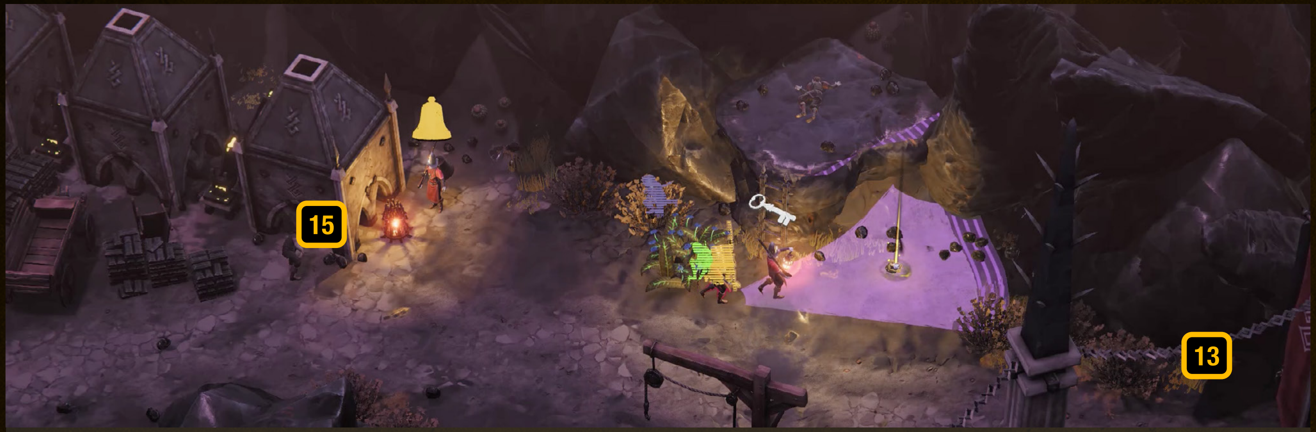
Quentin snatching a key

The key you just took will be the one you need for opening gate [11]. From there you work your way through the guard setups along the path to the doorway at [12] that will take you down to the bottom [13] where the Black Pearl is already in reach. You will need another key for that door [12]. Just wait for the patrolling Commissarius to arrive at [14] and take the next key from it. Nothing more needed.



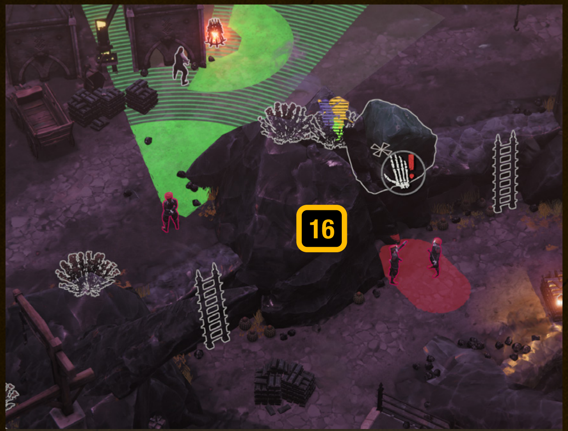
The path to the bridge and to the bottom

When you arrive at the bottom [13] make your way towards your objective [1]. Slowly. One step after the other. The guard setups can be tough here. Don't make the mistake of getting impatient. Becoming sloppy will be a punishing time sink in this game. No shortcuts to success, if you aren't already masterful at using all the skills perfectly. So, take your time... the right time, that is. Time well invested.

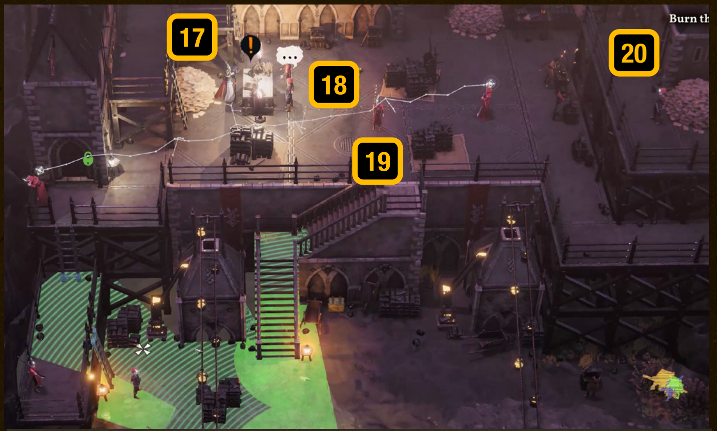


Further along the path to the Black Pearl

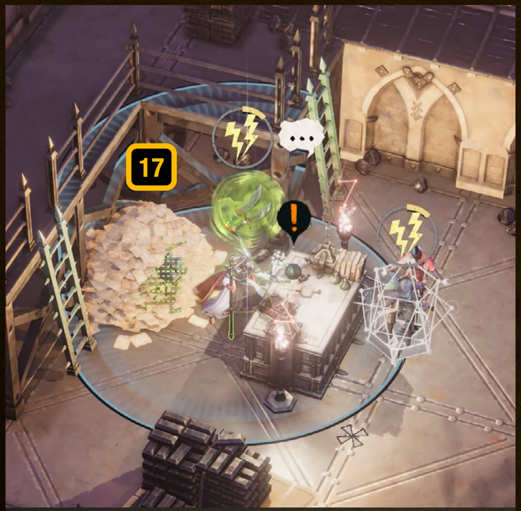
Right after you made some progress along the path to the Black Pearl, you already arrived at one of the torches [15] you need in case you go for the great distraction by fire. Further down the path use the environment for the Commissarius combo [16], double killing them by pushing the rock.



Killing rocks



Before the fire



Frozen Afia, hidden Suleidy

Get the torch [15] as soon as the way is cleared from guards. The bonfire at the crates will make some guards run and the situation at the Prognosticar's location [17] quite a bit easier, with the one Commissarius [18] talking to the Prognosticar and one Acolyte [19] less. Take out the Commissarius standing and watching in the back [20] right when you enter the area. You will then have to deal with the Kindred in a simultaneous double kill best executed with Shadow Mode again. If you've managed to reduce the setup to just the Prognosticar and the Acolyte [18], go for the Acolyte, agitate the Prognosticar and strike with another crewmate, that could have been hiding in that pile of paper among other options. Grab the Black Pearl and make your way back to the Tear [5] that you've already prepared for exit.

Back at the Marley we won't waste time and head straight back to Iron Bay for "Ash and Ore" for the final relic needed to complete the "Five of Marley's Crew":

6b - Ash and Ore at the Iron Bay

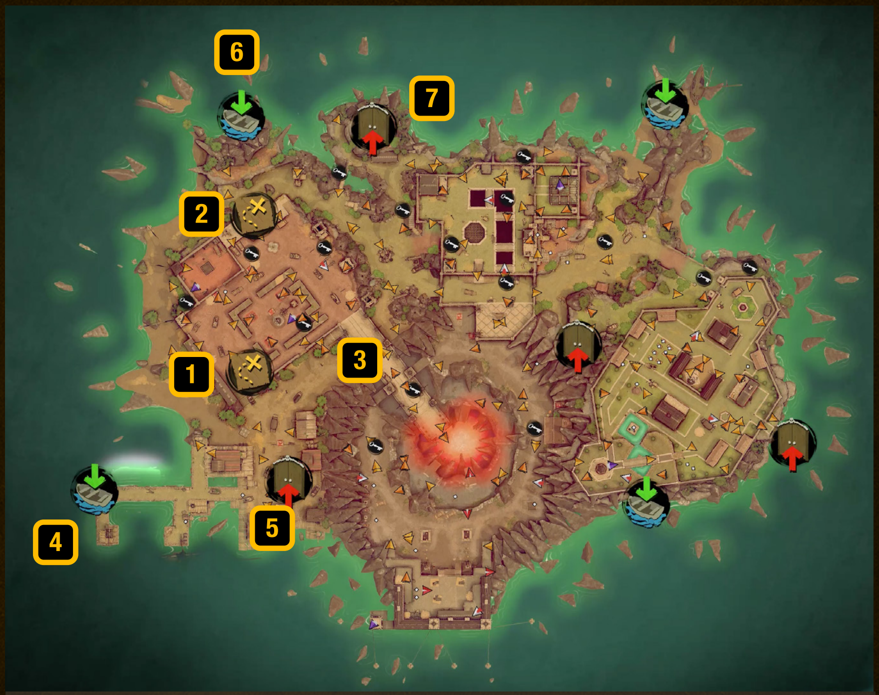
Main Goal: A relic lies hidden in the maddening machinery of the Iron Bay. Retrieve it.

Time of day: Day **Duration:** Long **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

Rewards: Soul Energy Iron Key

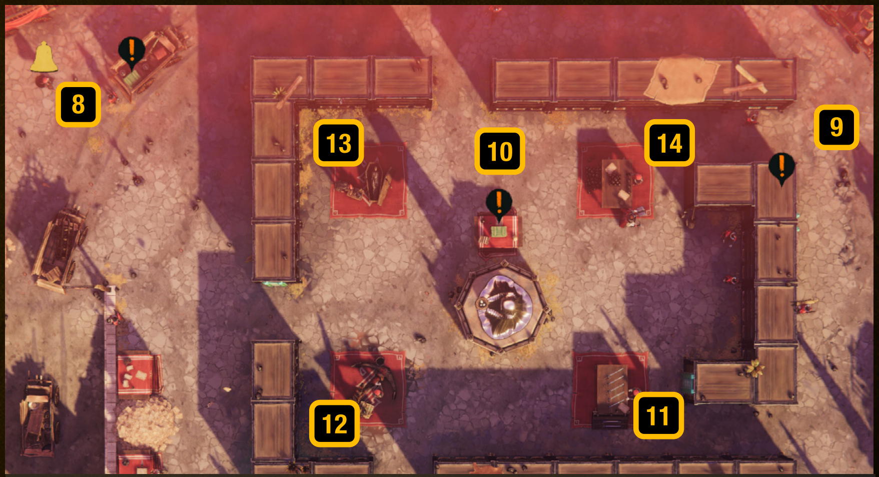
In "Ash and Ore" the crew searches the relic of "ash and blackened ore". But where exactly and is it still hidden or has the Inquisition already found it? Good thing the Inquisition keeps meticulous records of all soul-stained items. So we are set on inspecting their iron ledgers first, and see if they have done our work for us. There are two of them located either at [1] or [2]. Inspect the island, choose your path and landing point.

For this mission we won't need much planning for a different route and could well use the one from "Snatched from the Pit" again. At least for some parts. You can choose a different landing point than the "Grand Docks" [4], of course. "Dodger's Cave" [6] for example. If you happen to have Quentin in your crew already than you could easily let him pull down a ladder with his Fishing Rod there and reach the ledger at [2] in no time and all by himself. But taking a familiar route can make good sense at times: Prepare your exit with the same Tear at [5] again, then go for that busy area we've avoided last time. Both ledgers [1] and [2] are located in this area. The guard setups will be quite similar if you haven't cranked up the difficulty. But they will also differ by the fact alone that this mission takes place in broad daylight now, changing the guards' sight considerably.



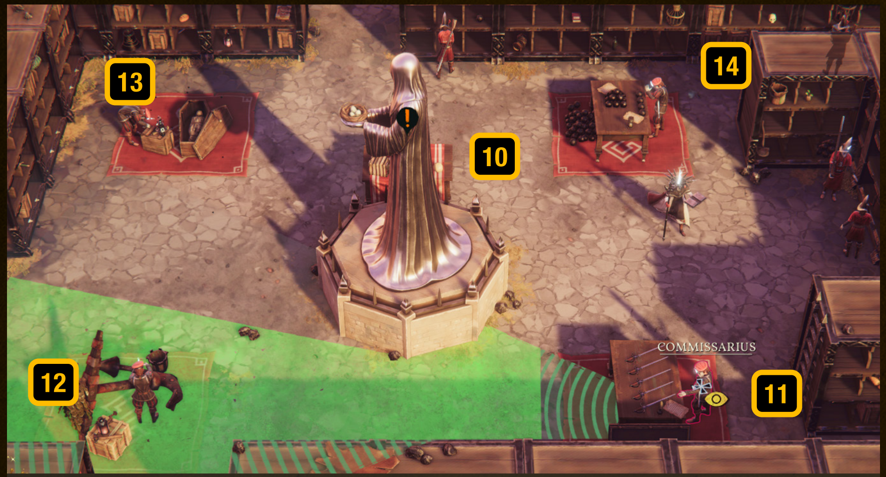
Iron Bay in broad daylight

No matter on what you decide, you deal with the guards you find, apply the "distract-isolate-reduce" strategy to get to one of the ledgers. You will learn that the Inquisition has already found the relic and split it up in three parts. Gathering them is your new objective and the crew has to find and examine the crates in which the relic pieces have been stored. You find them at [8], [9] and [10] where the Inquisition inspects and keeps all the items that they find or have been brought here. Getting to the crate at [10] is more tricky. With the crates at [8] and [9] you will be just fine.



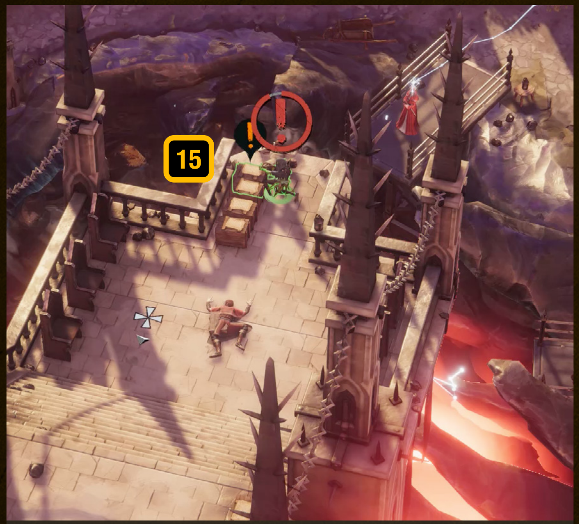
The locations of the crates

Dealing with the four **Commissarius’ [11], [12], [13] and [14]** is some solid “viewcone puzzle”. Closely observe where they are looking and when, depending on the **patrolling Prognosticar’s** routine in which they will be engaged in conversation. In these moments their viewcones will be redirected for some time. Take your time to solve this puzzle, don’t get frustrated and impatient.



A Commissarius quartet

Start with the **Commissarius** at **[11]**, then deal with the one **at [12]**. Follow the **Prognosticar’s** routine and be quick to hide any bodies. At some point and with not too many **Acolytes** that might still cross your plans, you finish it all with the help of **Shadow Mode**. Remember that the **Prognosticar** is only vulnerable when agitated and freezing a **crewmate**. Have one **crewmate** ready to take the **Prognosticar** out in this state. You might also benefit from the **Prognosticar** breaking routine when looking for a **Commissarius** that went missing.



Suleidy doing the job

The **first crate** you open contains a **chunk of black ore as a piece of the relic** processed.

The **second crate** you open puts you on a **detour**. The **crate** is empty, the **relic piece** has been miscategorized and is about to be thrown in the **pit**. The **Magistratus** at the end of the **bridge leading to the pit** has it in **another crate [15]** right next to him. You already know the **bridge’s setups** from **“Snatched From the Pit”**, if you have played this mission already. **Suleidy** is of great help here, providing cover along the way with **Cover Seeds**. **John** and **Afia** are great for bridging gaps and acting fast.

The **third crate** you open will contain the **third relic piece**. All **pieces** will now fuse together and reveal an **iron key** with an **Inquisition Insignia**. The **Captain** had given this key to **Red Marley** after he returned from a dangerous venture during the war, **Marley** tells us. He had let himself get captured and tortured to spy on the **Inquisition** and used this very key to escape again.

This is it. You have the whole **relic**. So make your way to **any Tear** and return to the **Marley**.

No matter if you’ve saved up all **Black Pearls** and **Soul Energy** for some inexplicable reason or have already revived **four of Marley’s Crew**: If you completed all the missions from the last pages, it is now time to **revive all five crewmates** for completing the **Captain’s Riddle** with **“Five of Marley’s Crew”**. The last chain of the **ominous door below the Marley’s deck** will break for good and reveal what’s behind it...

The last chain gone

7a - Into the Lion’s Den on Gran Alcázar

Main Goal: **Ignacia** has **Mordechai’s** skull. Infiltrate **Gran Alcázar** and snatch it from her clutches.

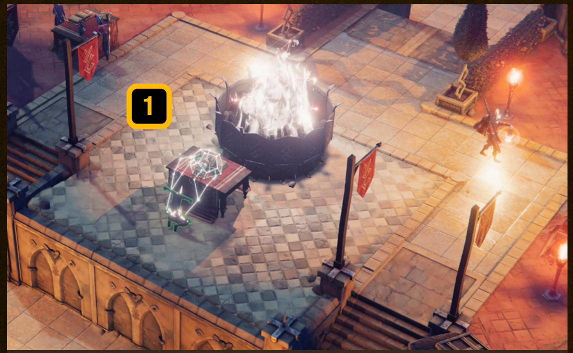
Time of day: Night **Duration:** Long **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

Rewards: The final mission of the second act unlocked

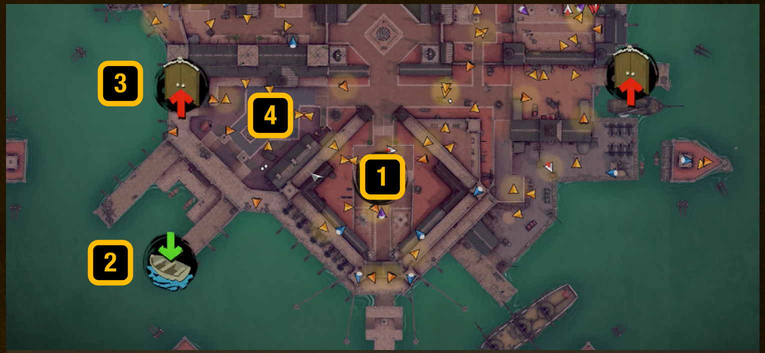
“Riddle hold now, bananas later”, **Afia** talks to **Estelle** and **below deck** she walks right through that **ominous door** that is now open - only to find her way blocked by yet **another closed ominous door**. There’s a **pedestal** with a skull that’s missing an **eye**. **Red Marley** assumes that this could be about **Back-Eye Mordechai’s black eye** that he claimed had once been touched by “a creature from the deepest Below”. Not covered, the eye would have shown him the future and drive him mad: *“Futures left untold.”* The **final relic**? **Marley** thinks that the **black eye** is still in **Mordechai’s skull** that we know is in **Ignacia’s** possession since we left **Dread Vine’s Cove** for good. The **final key** to the **Captain’s Riddle** is on **Gran Alcázar**. The **crew** suspects a trap set up by **Ignacia**. She knew that they’d come for the **skull** all along. **Afia’s** proposed plan is to split the **crew in two well balanced teams**. One **team** heading in first to claim the **skull**. And should things turn sour, the other would come to the rescue. So we set sail to **Gran Alcázar** and also the course to the finale of the **second act**. Two **missions** will follow, concluding the **second act**. Buckle up!

A door and a skull missing an eye

Gran Alcázar is the literal **fortress in the sea**. **Marley** suggests a **landing spot** with **“Pilgrims’ Landing”**. It’s the only one. **Mordechai’s skull** is out in the open, shielded by a **Custodes**. The whole thing already looks like a trap on first sight. We won’t need much looking at the whole map of the isle. It happens all in the **south**... for now. We choose the **first team**. And here’s a tip that might sound a bit harsh: Select your personal “B team” for this mission. **“Ignacia Unleashed”**, the **mission** that will follow, will be much more demanding and might need those **crewmates** that you are particularly familiar with.

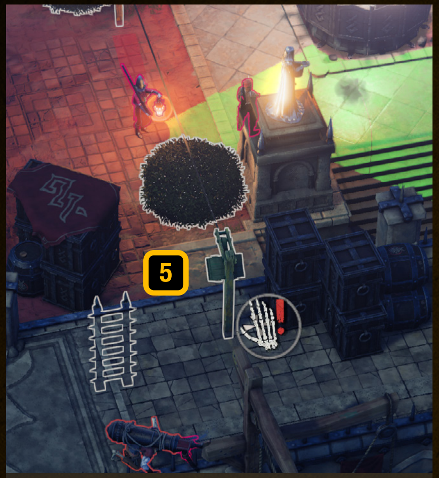


Mordechai’s skull in the open

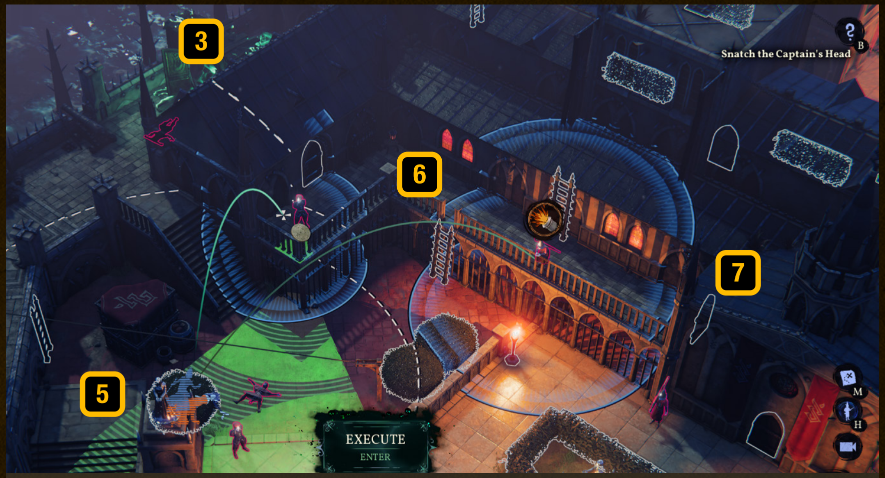


It all seems too easy

Otherwise there’s not much choice with your **path to your objective [1]**. From **Pilgrim’s Landing [2]** you go up a **ladder** get rid of all **guards** on that **first wall** there in no time, turn off any lights. Don’t care for taking down the **Custodes** at **[3]** and opening the **Tear in the Below**. Take the hint. The **first arena** with actual **guard setups** is **at [4]**. It can be a training ground for the actual arena with the **Captain’s skull [1]** that lies not too far. But you can take a **clever path** that is not right through the middle here. For that, you first take out the **Acolyte** carrying the torch to dim the light. You can do that by using the **crate on that transport cable** for knock-outs. The **Commissarius** won’t care too much for long. Get down a **ladder** or jump, then hide in the **bushes** with your **whole team of three** and plan your next move...



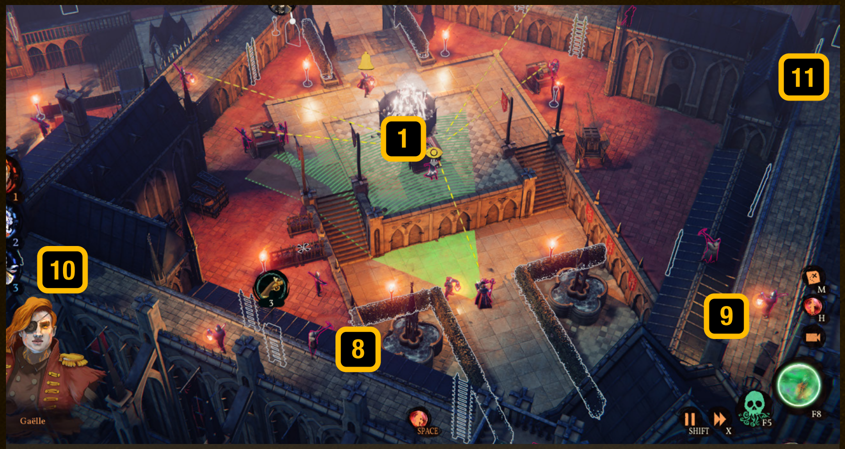
Turn off this light



A cunning move with Gaëlle

You want to get **up to [6]** and sneak your way to the **door at [7]**. There are, of course, many options that combine **quick moves and distraction**, but here's how you'd do it with **Pinkus** and **Gaëlle** in your team and **any other crewmate** she will shoot in the face of the **Acolyte** above: **Distract** the **Commissarius** with a **Coin** then shoot the **Kanol**, knocking out the **Acolyte** and your **cannonball crewmate**, both invisible from below. Then go for the **Commissarius** and bring the others up there. Exit this **area** and move on toward the **skull at [1]**.

"Snatch the Captain's Head" reads like a joke with **Mordechai's skull** that well protected by a great mass of guards watching the spot where it's kept.



Impressive numbers of dotted lines

You have to admire the **complete setup of guards** in at **[1]**. With their moving viewcones, these aren't even all the dotted lines. The image captured doesn't include the long viewcones of two **ludex guards** on the **roofs [8] and [9]** for instance. The essential strategy will work nevertheless: Start at the "outer rim", **distract** and **isolate guards** and **reduce** the **whole setup** step by step. Get on **walls and roofs** first, team up for your moves. Use the **"blind spots"** for **luring** and taking out **guards** there. **Suleidy's "Wander Dust, Reverse!"** upgrade is a blessing in combination with **Cover Seeds**. So is **Quentin's Golden Head**.

Jump attack a **ludex guard** when the others are not looking. You probably will be detected quite a lot. But you know that this is also the fun of it. After you cleared the "back", you deal with all the **guards** including the **Prognosticar** that are in the **yard** itself. **Mordechai's skull** can finally be "snatched". The **crew** will wonder though why there has been no trap set up by **Ignacia**.

But just you wait and be warned about **spoilers** here: Try to leave the **area** with **Mordechai's skull for any exit** and all of a sudden a memory will be unleashed without your doing, i.e. the game will load a state before you've taken out the **Prognosticar**. What's happening? The **crew** will complain. It happens again. You're stuck in a time loop. **Ignacia** did something to the **skull**. You cannot leave with it. It's the trap that everyone was expecting but not in that form. **Ignacia** displays her power and the **crew of three** will be set back to the **landing spot** for a showdown with the **Inquisitor**. Defeat her with the usual tactics against **Prognosticars** and she will unleash another memory. You won't have a chance against her for now.

7b - Ignacia Unleashed on Gran Alcázar

Main Goal: **Ignacia's** trap has sprung. Even **the Marley** was pulled in. Get in there and turn this ship around.

Time of day: Day **Duration:** Long **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

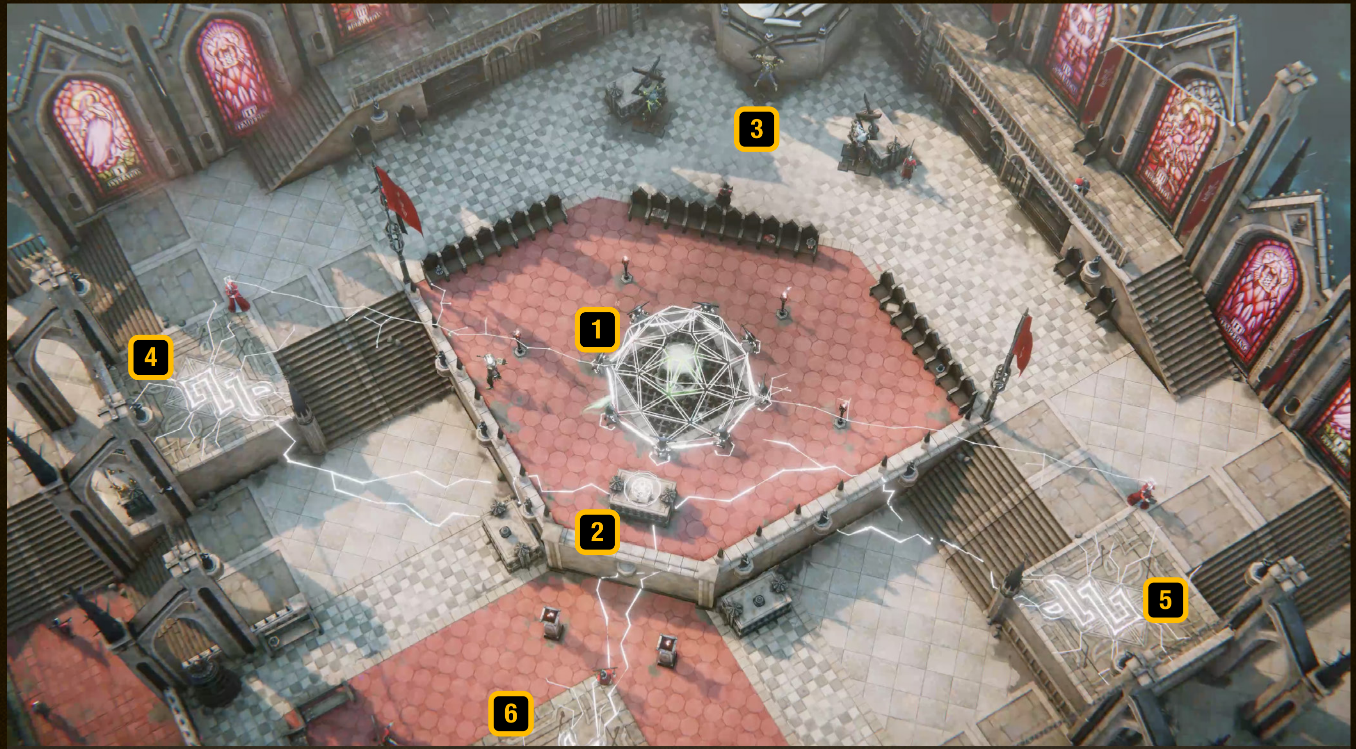
Rewards: The final mission of the second act. **Mordechai's skull** on top.

The last thing you see on **Gran Alcázar** are the **three crewmates** frozen in place by two **Prognosticars** and **Ignacia** herself, who shares this ability. Your **crewmates** are lost for now.

The scene changes. You are now back on the **Marley's deck** with the **remaining three crewmates**. They will now attempt to make their move against **Ignacia**, free the **imprisoned crewmates** and snatch the **Captain's skull** once and for all in the next **mission "Ignacia Unleashed"**. Unfortunately **Red Marley** is also in trouble. **Ignacia** uses the **Captain's head** to pull her away. Now she's held prison in the **area to the very north of Gran Alcázar**, together with the **other crewmates**. This is where we are heading.

Face it, creature. No matter how vast your power is, you stand no match against me.

Arrogant!



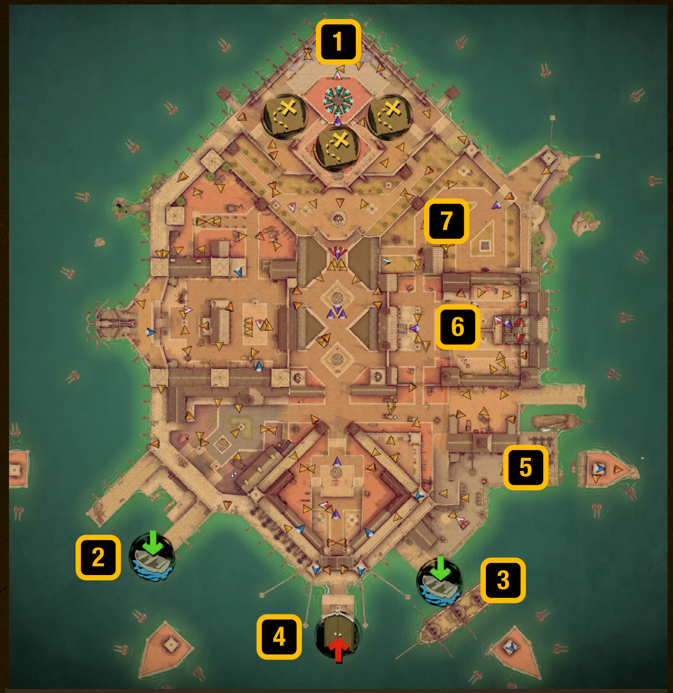
The beauty of sacral buildings - without a roof

The briefing gives you some great preview on what you are up against there. You see **Red Marley** trapped and sealed in the **center [1] of the open cathedral** right in front of an **altar [2]** where **Mordechai's skull** is on display. **Ignacia** is already snaring **Marley's** soul. And the **crewmates** tied up pretty much in the **back [3]** are next. The **three of the crew** that are still able to move have to destroy **three seals [4] to [6]** that stabilize the **Fire**. **All seals** have to be broken at the same time. Anything other and **Ignacia** will unleash a memory, setting back progress. But luckily not too far into the past.

We already had a peek at that **map of Gran Alcázar** by daylight in our introduction to the **“Missions & Islands”** chapters and the challenges that await in the **open cathedral**. Now it's your turn to face these challenges yourself - although with this rough guide by your side.

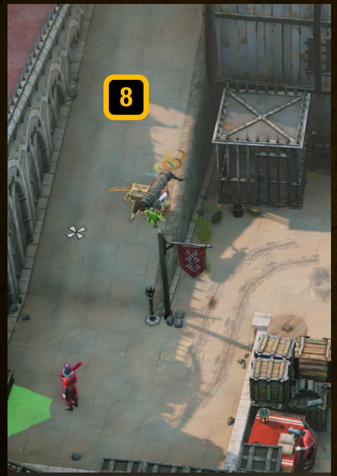
Choose a **landing spot to the south**. Can be **Pilgrim's Landing [2]** again like in the **previous mission**. Or **Servant's Pier [3]**. There's only one **Tear in the Below** for an exit at **[4]** at the **southmost point**. Not much of a choice here. But (**spoilers ahead!**) the **way back from the north** will not be an issue once you succeeded. Trouble is getting up there first.

Knowing now that the way back will be a cakewalk in this **mission** gives you perfect opportunity for **practicing your stealth skills** and **use distractions for sneaking by guards** as much as possible on **Gran Alcázar**. **It's good practice as even thinking about ways to play it “stealthily” usually gives you good focus. You you won't be taken away by thinking that you have to clear whole areas for just moving on.** **Gran Alcázar**, as intimidating as this island may seem at first with all its **patrolling guards**, is an ideal and even rather “calm” place for **exploring diverse strategies**. Get on your route this way and you can make your way to your objective in about 15 minutes, only taking out a **few guards** here an there.

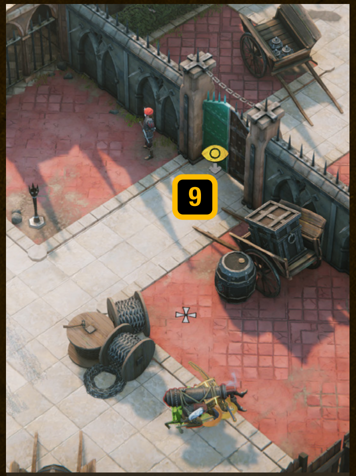


South to north

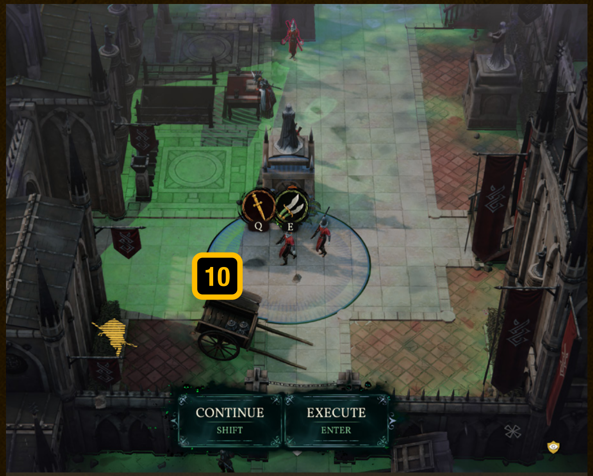
Let's look at a few situations from a **eastern route** taken through **areas [5], [6] and [7]**: In **area [5]**, right after the **landing spot Servant's Pier [3]**, you are able to sneak by quite some viewcones and get up that **ramp [8] towards area [6]** in no time. No need to take out the **ludex** or get to **rooftops**. Mostly sneaking. For entering **area [6]** you don't even have to **distract** any guard for sneaking in at the **gate [9]**. There might always be **some guards** on the way that you better take care off for making it easier, like in **area [6]** where you should go for the **patrol [10] behind that pillar** using **Shadow Mode** for not being spotted by the **Acolyte in the back** watching. Someone like **Quentin**, you see hiding in a bush in this example, can use his **Golden Head** for **luring** the **Acolyte** towards **his position**. **Any crewmate** still hiding **behind the pillars** is ready for an **ambush**. Eventually it will be all about the **power of distraction**, no matter if you take **guards** out or simply leave them be and just use a window of opportunity to move forth. All while staying undetected.



Ramping up

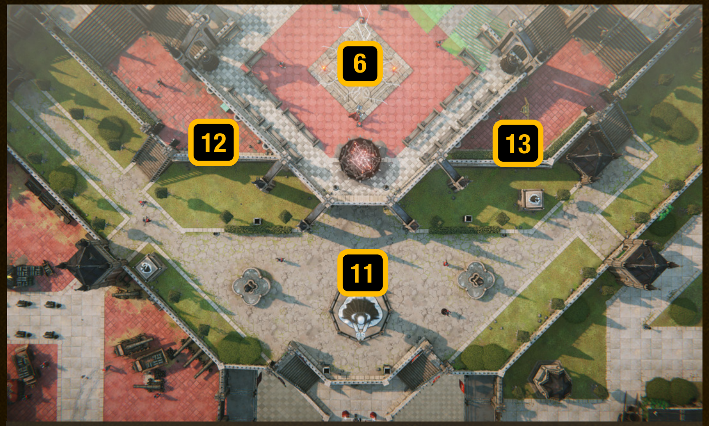


Turn off this light



Turn off this light

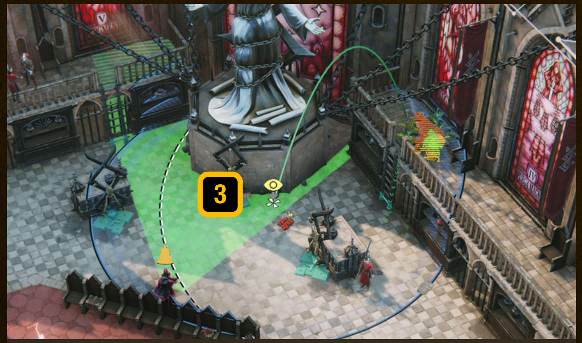
You will certainly manage and once you arrive at the **open cathedral** you will still be **sneaking a lot**, but will certainly come back to our now well established **strategy of “distract-isolate-reduce”**. Don't get tempted by any idea to break the **three seals** before you have taken out **next to all the guards**. **Impatience is the cardinal sin for this type of game and good for a lot of frustration.** Taking away each **small setup of guards** from the overall puzzle has to be enjoyed and celebrated. Such small victories put the fun in the game.



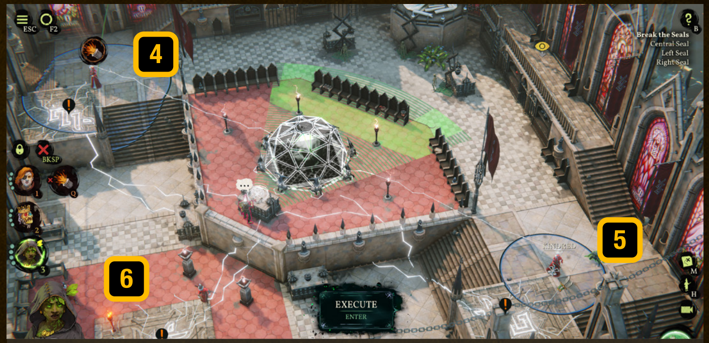
A bird's eye view of the open cathedral

You will again start by taking out **all guards watching from afar**. The greater part of **guards** are **Acolytes** that can be **lured and isolated** well. As moving across the **whole area** is key, you might even consider clearing the **gardens [11]** right in front of the **cathedral**. This would allow your crew to run along for reaching **different entry points**. But it might not be worth the trouble. Make sure though that the **mid platform level [12] and [13]** is cleared from **guards**. These **guards'** viewcones can easily interfere with your path and plans and you will also find yourself running **up and down stairs** all the time for hiding. **Guards** can also be **lured** to these lower levels, **isolating** them. Use all you have.

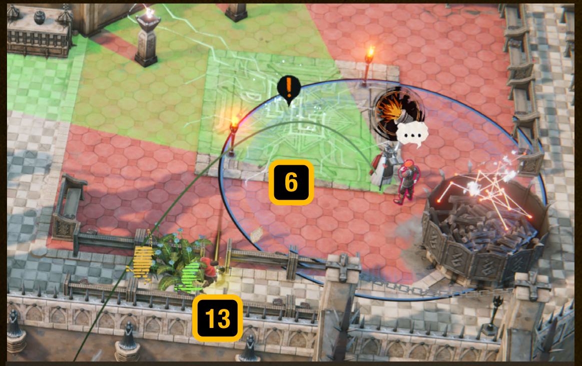
Message delivered: You better take out as many **guards** as possible from the **“periphery”** before you think about breaking the **seals** and the **guards** protecting them. Once you've reduced all to the very “core”, solving this puzzle will still be tricky with **Ignacia** on patrol, who you can neither distract nor take out. Not much wiggle room. Playing on **higher difficulty** will even add a **third Sister to the Kindred at [3]**. The setup with the **Prognosticar**, **Commissarius** and **Acolyte** is particularly tight across all difficulties. Try to **isolate the Acolyte** nonetheless. You can manage this with **Quentin's Golden Head** for instance behind the **benches at [13]**.



Luring two Acolytes with Firecrackers



Making it happen for two Kindred



A final strike with all reduced

When only the **Commissarius** and the **Prognosticar** remain, attack the one with a less fancy hat, get frozen, then go for the **Prognosticar**. In our example here, we enjoyed shooting a body in the **Prognosticar's** face with **Gaëlle's Kanol**. Then get a **crewmate** to **each seal** and **coordinate action with Shadow Mode**. Do ***all*** of this while patrolling **Ignacia** is not looking, of course. Breaking the **seals** will cause havoc among the **Inquisition**. Enjoy your victory for the moment, then free your **crewmates at [3]**, take **Mordechai's skull** from the **altar [2]** and make your way to **the Tear at [4]**. Like said, it will be more a stroll in the park with all **guards** affected by the **broken seals**, shaking in some terrible state. This concludes the **second act**. You made it here! Congratulations!

The Red Marley - The Captain's Gambit and the Final Act

You've returned on the **Marley's deck**, enjoying your victory over **Ignacia** and the **Inquisition** merely a bit. All feel that the story isn't finished yet. **Afia** regrets not having finished off **Ignacia**. **Marley** still grumpy about **Ignacia** using her powers against her. At least the **Cursed Crew** got their **Captain back** in a way with **Mordechai's skull** now on display at the **stern of the ship**, right next to the **map table**. **Afia** removes the **Captain's black eye** from behind the eye-patch, enters the **hold below deck** and inserts it into the other skull. The **second ominous door** opens. She has a bit of walking and jumping to do and finds a **mirror**. This is the **Captain** speaking:

"Whoever stands before this mirror, heed my warning. My treasure is more than gold. It is temptation. Catastrophe. I knew everyone would be after it. Especially Ignacia. The Marley won't make it on her own. A ship is lost without a captain. You must guide the Marley through the storm. I left you this mirror. It will prepare you for the things to come. If you need answers, seek them in the Marley's deepest holds. Help her see the truth and send the treasure back to the Below. And don't worry. There'll be plenty coin left after, har harr."

Mordechai

Whoever stands before this mirror, heed my warning.

Turn off this light

Another riddle, it seems. Over the course of the **third act** you will learn more about the **crew's** past when visiting the **hold below deck**, exploring memories, revisiting moments of the past. The **ancient mirror** is brought **on deck** and now part of **"command HQ" upstairs**, together with the **map table**, **upgrade shop** and **Mordechai's skull**, always good for a bit of communication now and then - a few surprises in stock...

The **third and final act** uncovers **two more islands** on the **map**: **Calamity Reef** and **Angler's Grave**. You've already paid **Angler's Grave** a brief visit when you first met the **Trickster Virgilio**, but without really knowing where you were exactly. So **both islands** are brand new and the places where you find **2 Black Pearls** and **2 Soul Energy** allowing you to revive the **remaining two crew members**. Completing all these **missions** and having **the whole crew aboard and revived is one of the "conditions" for unlocking the great finale**, that will be all about the **"Captain's Treasure"**, of course, which might not be quite what you expect.

We will go into **all four of these missions** with this guide, but also dial down on the level of detail for that. With or without this guide, you certainly got the hang of the game by now. Practiced the **essential strategies** a lot with all those **guards of the Inquisition** now gone. Hey, you made it to the **third and final act**! So great! We put trust in you as a player to now cope quite well and experiment with **each of the eight characters** and combinations of **characters' skills** for finding your own unique playthrough of the game.

And while we are talking about the **characters**, you are in for a **great surprise** now with the **mirror** that (**spoilers!**) presents you with **another 14 missions** in the so-called **"Captain's Tests"**. What the **third act** has in stock for you is more than the amount of content you've played in the **first and second act** combined! You're about to find out about the **character questlines** in the game's storyline once you approach the **mirror**: Each of the **seven characters of the original "Cursed Crew"** has its **own questline**, ranging from **a single huge mission** in the case of **Suleidy** to **three missions in a row** for **Gaëlle**. All **other five members** have **two full missions**. As a **second condition for unlocking the great finale**, you have to **complete *four* of these character questlines**. You can only start one at a time. The guide will give you a rough overview of what to expect, but otherwise you're on your own with these. We mean it when we say that we trust in you...

Afia

Hmm... Now what's the secret with this thing.

The mirror's secret

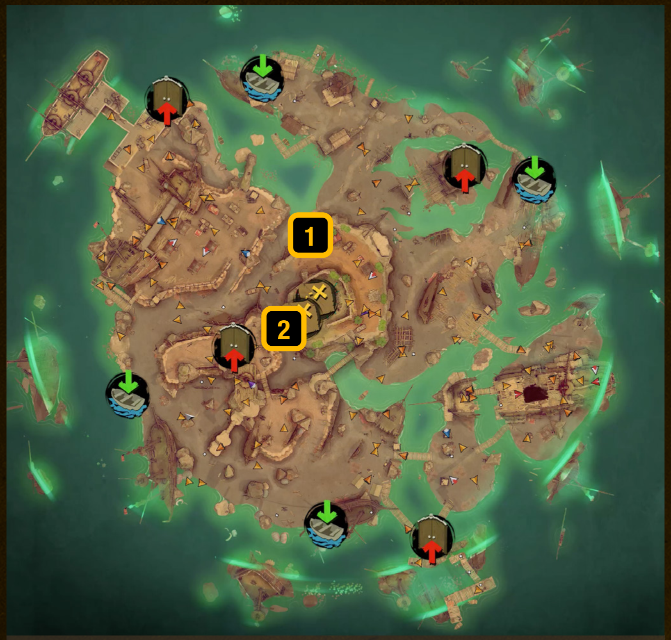
9a - Lighthouse Locutions on Calamity Reef

Main Goal: On top of the **falling lighthouse**, a **Black Pearl** awaits. Getting up there might be harder than it seems.

Time of day: Day **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

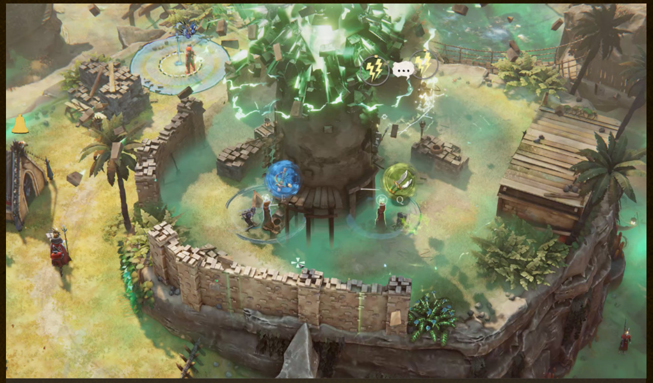
Rewards: **Black Pearl**

With the details now to be dialed down, we briefly walk through those **missions** now that enable you to revive all the **remaining members of the Cursed Crew** once completed. Afterwards with all **crewmates** revived, we will have a quick overview of the **Captain's Test questlines** for the **seven crew members**, where you have to pick four for completion to unlock the **great finale**. With a huge **spoiler alert**, we will also look at what happens in the end.



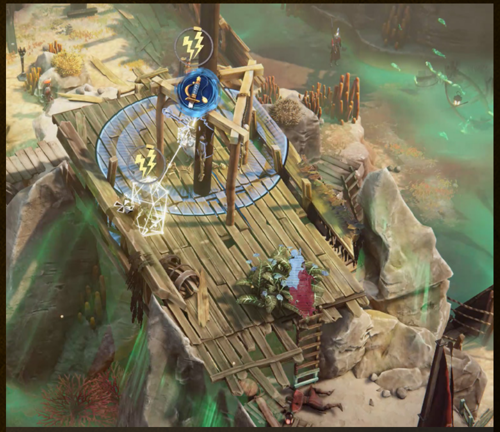
Calamity Reef by day

So without further ado, let's begin with **"Lighthouse Locutions"** at **Calamity Reef**, a graveyard of haunted wrecks and former battlefield. Here you get the **first of the two remaining Black Pearls** in the game. The **Black Pearl** rests upon the highest point, the **fallen lighthouse [1]**. This where we are headed to.



Coordinated action at the fallen lighthouse

With its almost perfectly circular layout and the **lighthouse [1] as our objective in its center**, you can pick **any landing spot** to your liking. The **two objectives on the map** merely mark **entrance to the lighthouse** and the **Black Pearl** to grab. It's a perfectly straightforward **mission** with an **intricate setup of guards** that includes **two Kindred** and a **patrolling Prognosticar** at the **lighthouse's entrance [1]**. Watch their routines carefully and you're good with **any combinations of skills** for playing out **"distract-isolate-reduce" tactics**. Open the **door to the lighthouse** and the **Lighthouse Keeper** will appear and engage **Marley** and **Afia** in an elaborate conversation telling them that *"there is a man who, albeit dressed as a scholar, lacks a proper diction"*, torturing the **Keeper of the Lights'** bodily remains. Stop this **at [2]** and you will get entrance to the **lighthouse**, eventually be granted the **Black Pearl**. The Keeper will even open a **magical hatch** for convenient transportation. Find and open any of the available **Tears in the Below** and head back to the **Marley**.



Stop the torturing

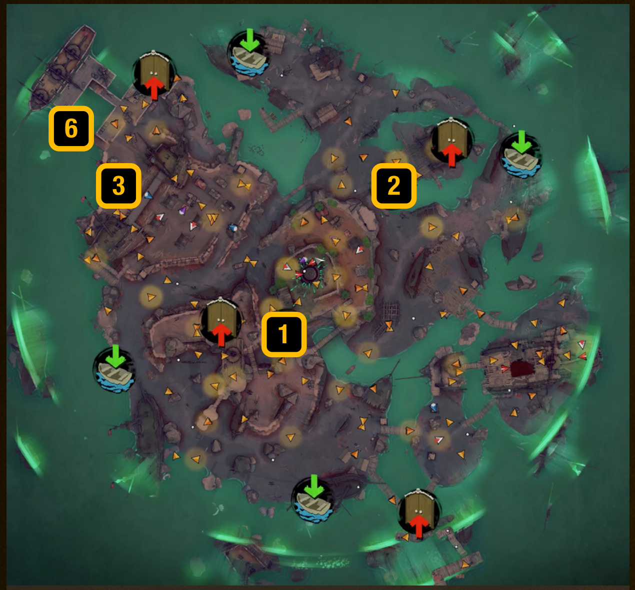
9b - Small Crew, Big Plans on Calamity Reef

Main Goal: Another pirate crew has sent a call for help from Calamity Reef. If we help, we might get some Soul Energy in exchange.

Time of day: Night **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

Rewards: Soul Energy

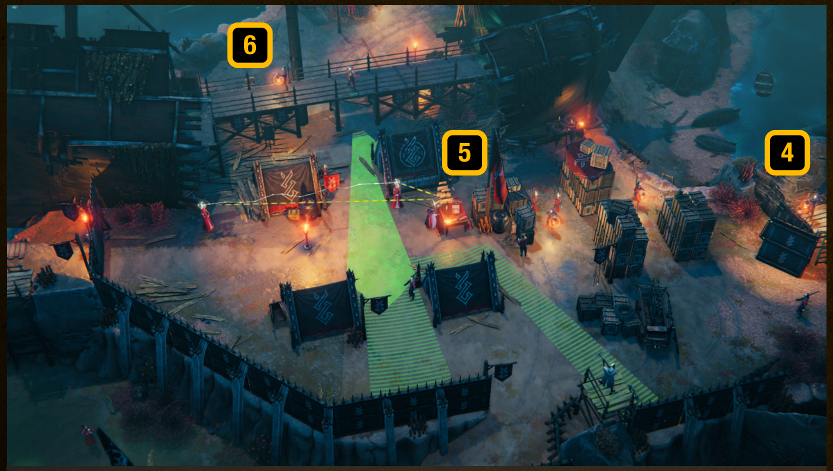
Back at the ship, Red Marley feels someone watching her, probing her mind, like needles in her soul. Talk to Mordechai's skull to find out that Ignacia is the one doing that, possessing the head, spying on the crew, but also completely overestimating her remaining powers now. All about talking for now. No unleashing memories anymore. So we are good to proceed according to our plan. You can pay Angler's Grave a visit or start any of the available Captain's Test now. But for this guide, it's Calamity Reef again, this time by night...



Calamitiy Reef at night

A distress call has reached Marley's thoughts, coming from the isle. It's Captain Harlock of the Sally captured by the zealots while on a raid. Where they're held you have to find out by yourself as the "connection" breaks. The conversation has left behind some Soul Traces though that should point you to Sally's location. There's one at a lifeboat [1] and another one at some cannon near [2]. Get to any one of them and choose a landing spot that fits your preferred path. This will be the first part of the mission.

Examine a Soul Trace and your next objective will be put on the map with Harlock's ship. Surprisingly, it is located in some Inquisition encampment. A small wooden ship right on the table in the middle of the main setup of guards for the mission's finale. You have to deal with quite some Acolytes there, Kindred Sisters, a patrol of three guards and at least two Iudex guards overlooking the area. Add a Commissarius on higher grounds with a wooden watchtower [4] in case you went for a higher difficulty setting. Proceed with all your strategical experience...



“Toy ship” Sally in the encampment

This naturally includes taking care of any guards you find in the back of the area first and make use of the fact that bodies cannot be seen from lower grounds. Once you've cleared the area, approach the table [5] and pick up the miniature ship. They have a nifty little gem from a raid for you, rich with Soul Energy. But you first have to slowly carry the ship towards the Timeless Shores [6], setting it into water there. You will find a Tear in the Below close by that you can use for getting back to the Marley. Both missions completed, you now have the Black Pearl and Soul Energy from Calamity Reef, able to revive a member of the original Cursed Crew.

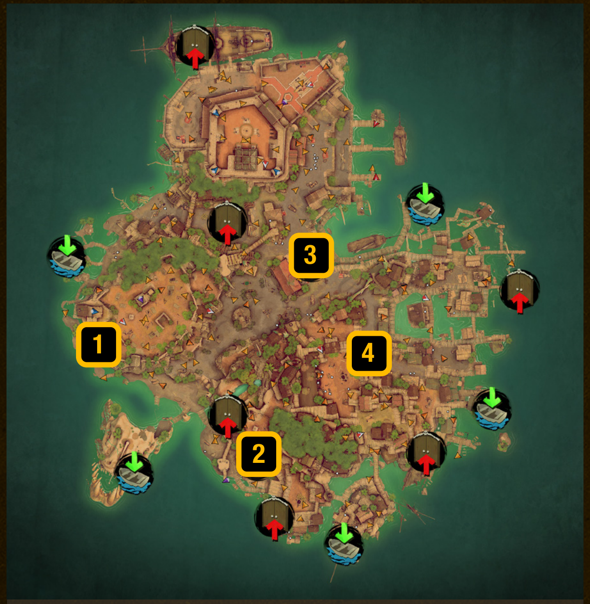
1a - Graveyard Haunt on Angler's Grave

Main Goal: Somewhere in Angler's Grave a Black Pearl lies hidden. Find out where it is, but also take the hint...

Time of day: Day **Duration:** Long **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

Rewards: Black Pearl

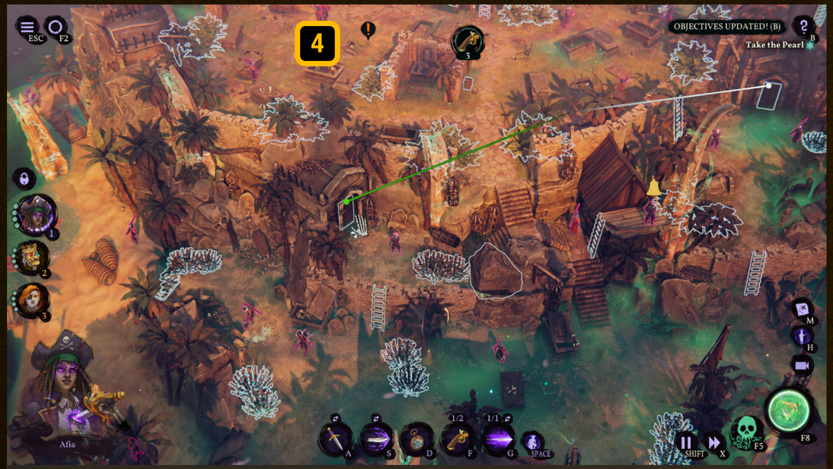
Fire Thralls disturb the dead at Angler's Grave going after a Black Pearl buried there. So are we, but where to dig at the graveyard [1] no-one actually knows except of two possible contacts on the island: Yolanda the graveyard keeper who is currently held prison and interrogated by the Inquisition at [2] as her soul carries the scent of a Black Pearl. Free her and hear her. Or a certain Richard who also bears the mark of the Pearl's presence and is currently trying to tell the Inquisition at [3] where to find it, his words falling on deaf ears though. Eavesdropping on this conversation is your other option for finding out about the Pearl's location.



Angler's Grave by day

The source of information you pick will certainly help you decide which landing spot to pick. Browse through the guard setups and possible exits through Tears in the Below. Take into account that you will eventually end up at the graveyard [1] digging. Eavesdropping on Richard will take you through or close to the shanty town [4] that you already know from your nightly meeting with Trickster Virgilio right at the beginning of your journey. The place is a crowded wooden labyrinth of huts and ladders. A demanding environment for sure. Could be a nice trip though, but so would certainly be the beaches closer to Yolanda. And freeing her could be the one good deed on Angler's Grave you do that sunshiny day. Pick your route and deal with the guards along the way. They won't be the mission's real challenge.

No matter where and from whom you get the information eventually, the grave to dig for the Black Pearl will be your next objective and is located at [4]. The graveyard [1] itself is heavily frequented by Inquisition guards digging and looking for the Pearl themselves. The challenge begins to ramp up when trying to enter the graveyard. Turn on the **highlights** for overview here.



The graveyard and the way up to it

You have a lot of hiding options. There's a secret passage through the doors of two mausoleums. Also a rock for burying at least one Acolyte beneath it. Once you are up at the graveyard itself you find the grave with the Black Pearl closely watched by a Prognosticar positioned on a rooftop, but also other guards, including a patrol of two Acolytes. There's a Commissarius that is itself watched by a Iudex with an insanely large daylight viewcone positioned on a roof far in the back. Take the detour. Once you feel save from viewcones, dig up the Black Pearl and be on your way to any Tear in the Below. Head back to the Marley.

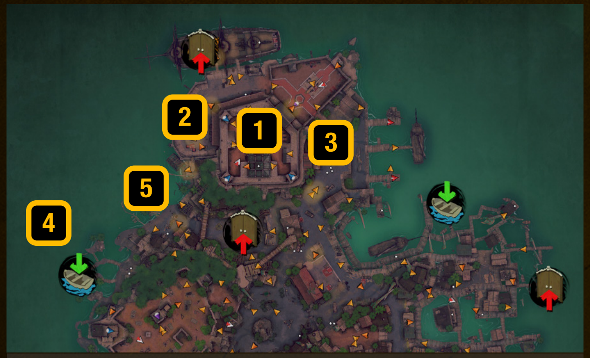
1b - The Kumquat Connection on Angler's Grave

Main Goal: An old contact here can supply the Crew with some concentrated Soul Energy. Let's meet.

Time of day: Night **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 3

Rewards: Soul Energy

While you're on the Marley, make sure to "Follow the Clues" down "memory lane" below deck in the hold. Virgilio will be by your side and learning about the Marley's story will shine a light on the past and prepares you for things to come. We will however catch up with a recap before the finale in this guide. Once you're ready, go to the map table and head back to Angler's Grave for the final charge of Soul Energy you'll need for reviving the last crew member.

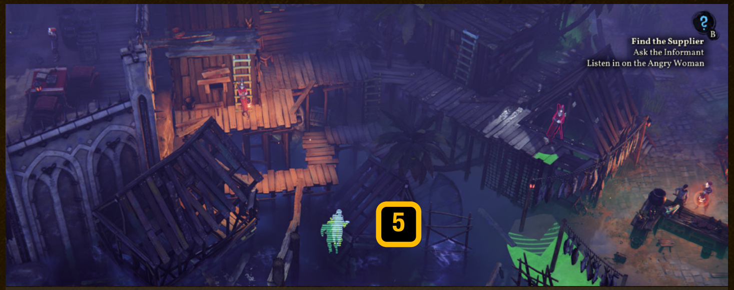


Just consider north

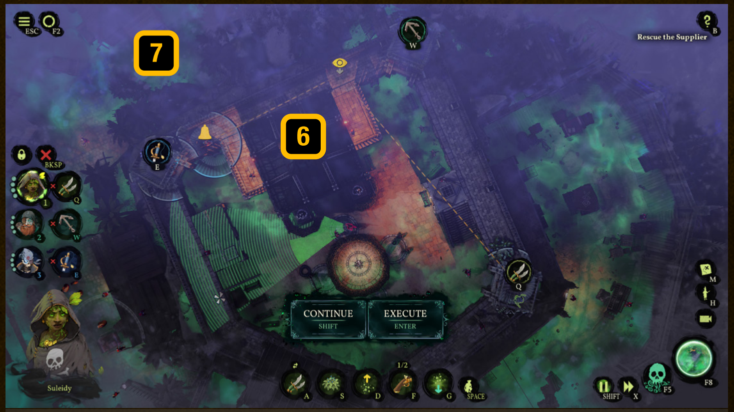
"The Kumquat Connection" will be all about the north of Angler's Grave and the Inquisition's fortification located there at [1]. The old contact that was supposed to provide the crew with some concentrated Soul Energy and make all this a cakewalk has gone missing. You find him captured in the fortification at [6], and you can go straight to him. Looking for this piece of information however is your first mission objective. There are two options for that again, relevant for the path you choose across the island's north: You could directly ask an informant at [2] or eavesdrop on some tumult around an angry woman at [3]. Both locations are close to the fortification [1]. Approach from east or west and let your preference decide again.

Some recommendation: You can easily reach the informant by picking Rodman's Beach [4] if you have three swimmers and climbers ready like Toya, John and Suleidy. The three are a perfect match for this mission, as they have a full infiltration options for the fortification as soon as you've unlocked your main objective, i.e. retrieving your old contact from the building [6] inside the fortification.

Once you're inside, deal first with the three ludex guards observing each other and all that's happening on the walls. If you don't, you won't get lucky, stuck in trial and error loops instead. So find the ways to get on top of their towers. One of them you can easily climb via ivies. Use good timings, distractions and cover for getting down to the tower entrances that are not closely watched. Suleidy is a real asset on this mission with Cover Seeds. Take the ludexes out in Shadow Mode. After that, taking out any other guards will be a breeze.
Then get your old contact at [6], carry him out, throw him down to the intended meeting point [7] and get that Soul Energy from him. The next Tear is only a few steps away. Head back to the Marley. With both missions completed on Angler's Grave, revive a crewmate!



Your way to the informant and into the fortification



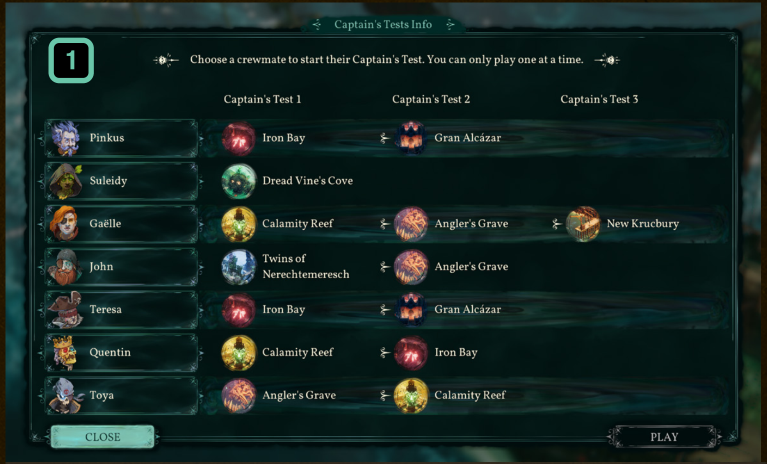
Taking out the ludexes

The Red Marley - The Captain's Tests

Here come the Captain's Tests of which you have to complete four to unlock the finale, together with the whole crew revived for it. If you've already revived them all before starting the first, then you find these tests all on display at the ancient mirror in the stern of the Marley's deck, like shown in [1] below. Which ones to pick for the four? It is really up to you again. You could first pick a questline for some character you like best and maybe already have the most experience with. This will probably set you on a fast lane to the finish line, if you want that. Or go for a crewmate that needs some "extra training" for the great finale. Maybe because you haven't spent enough time getting to know his or her signature skills. Also keep in mind that you can still play all of the remaining Captain's Tests even after you've finished the story of "Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew". We have great endgame content in stock for you, too.

The following overview of all the "character missions" might help you with your choice a bit. We decided however that this would be the part now where we won't guide you with even a lesser detailed walkthrough. No maps, no talking about difficult setups of guards. You're all in for surprises when you revisit most of the islands in these nonetheless "full-blown" missions. Harr! We enjoy this idea quite a bit...

Aye, that being said and with a crucial warning about major spoilers ahead, we will reveal what the great finale will be in some detail after that. We give you that, and it had been a difficult decision for us. So be cautious with any peeking at the pages following the Captain's Tests!



Choose a crewmate to start their Captain's Test. You can only play one at a time.

	Captain's Test 1	Captain's Test 2	Captain's Test 3
Pinkus	Iron Bay	Gran Alcázar	
Suleidy	Dread Vine's Cove		
Gaëlle	Calamity Reef	Angler's Grave	New Krucbury
John	Twins of Nerechtemeresch	Angler's Grave	
Teresa	Iron Bay	Gran Alcázar	
Quentin	Calamity Reef	Iron Bay	
Toya	Angler's Grave	Calamity Reef	

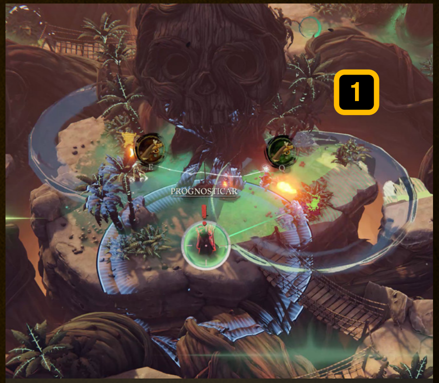
All of the Captain's Tests you have from the mirror

Captain's Test for Suleidy

"Can't let old grudges remain unsettled, not on this voyage", the Captain says to Suleidy, who's standing in front of the ancient mirror - in a way explaining the purpose of the mirror and the Captain's Test to all crew members. Suleidy's test brings her back to Dread Vine's Cove where she has to talk to the Dread Vine, even though she does not want to. It is all about the uncomfortable confrontation with the past and settling things in these tests...

4d - Suleidy's Cure on Dread Vine's Cove

Suleidy's test has only a single mission that will however take you some time to complete. She arrives and suggests having a chat according to Mordechai's assignment, but the Vine currently undergoes a purging ritual by the Inquisition. Helping the Vine might just lay the perfect foundation for having the talk. First objective is to get to its roots for examination. Suleidy will do a "soul-graft" then, but this produces ten offshoots of Dread's Souls across the island: Anger Bushes have to be fed by luring guards into them. Fear Fruits have to be "activated" first and will explode in proximity of a guard. The perfect job for Suleidy's Wander Dust. Four of ten stabilize the Vine's soul for the moment, but the Grand Rectificator, some specialized Prognosticar with Kindred Sisters by his side, starts the ritual. Stopping it right at the Vine [1], Suleidy manages to heal her old mentor. The test concludes with the talk and the two will settle things once and for all.



Final shootout at the Vine

Captain's Test for Teresa la Ciega

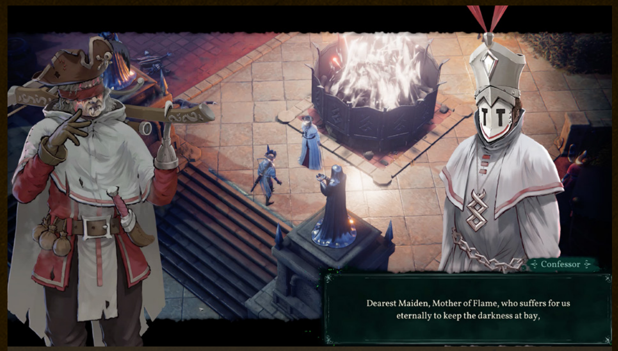
Teresa looks into the mirror and sees a statue, a Rite. Reluctant at first, she will give in and start her part of the **Captain's Test** at **Iron Bay**. Her Journey on the **Maiden's Path** will commence on **Gran Alcázar** once she found a **confidant** to walk with her...

7d - Teresa's Lament (Ch. 1) at the Iron Bay

The **Iron Bay** is a place of cleansing both matter and mind. **Teresa** requires a **confidant** to walk the path of the **Maiden**. She claims that there is a likely candidate in the **sanatorium** but listening in some conversations in the area for details is the **first objective**. The visit takes place in broad day-light in the **gardens of the island's north**. There she finds her confidant with the **Blind Confessor**, knocks him out, takes him back with her to the **Marley**.

8d - Teresa's Lament (Ch. 2) on Gran Alcázar

Next stop will be **Gran Alcázar** by night where **Teresa** will walk the **Maiden's Path**, following the **Confessor** to **several stations** of the path. All while permanently dealing with the **guards** along the way as if it were nothing. **Teresa's** cursed soul destabilizes on the **Maiden's Path** and echoes of the past appear at **each station**. These "shadows" have to be met with her **Iron Judgement** station by station until they reach the **open cathedral up north**, that we know all too well. This time less crowded though. The two will have a final talk resting at a bench, and find closure for the **test**.



Dearest Maiden, Mother of Flame, who suffers for us eternally to keep the darkness at bay,

Teresa and the Confessor at Gran Alcázar

Captain's Test for Quentin Aalbers

When **Quentin** looks into the **mirror**, the first thing he recognizes is its potential value as a treasure itself. There's no bargain to be made though. The **Captain** appears and he knows that **Quentin** has "never quite seen eye to eye" with his **old man**. And he has an **inheritance letter** for him that actually is merely a **map**, showing a part of **Calamity Reef**. Is there a treasure hunt about to start? **Quentin** can't quite wrap his head around it, as his **father** had been a merchant and hated treasure hunting. And he hated that his son loved it...

9e - Quentin's Hunt (Ch. 1) at Calamity Reef

Quentin and **two crew members** head to **Calamity Reef** by night to find out what it's all about. The **old man's map** guides you picking the **landing spot** for starters. The treasure hunt takes **Quentin and his crewmates** across the **island**, through its **wrecks** and **guard setups**. Besides a difficult family history, **Quentin** uncovers **two more map pieces**, uses his **Treasure Rod** quite a few times until he eventually holds a **riddle note** that points him to the **Iron Bay** and its **pit**.

7e - Quentin's Hunt (Ch. 2) at the Iron Bay

After some thinking and talking **back at the Marley**, the crew heads to **Iron Bay**, where the **Aalbers family** once vacationed and the **old man** apparently had hid something right in the **pit**. The **three crewmates** make their way there and **Quentin** uses the **Treasure Rod** for pulling out a chest. Another riddle solved next by finding yet another note scratched on the **floor of an iron cage**. Finally the three head to a **place in the sanatorium** where **Quentin** and his **old man** once had a memorable talk. **Quentin** literally throws his **Golden Head** in a **well** there to read with his own eyes what his **father** left him in a final note and message. **Quentin's test** concludes with him becoming a calm man. Who would have thought the **mirror** having such powers.

Captain's Test for Toya of Iga

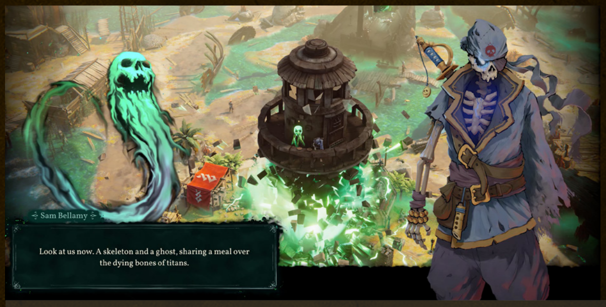
Toya's test will all be about his cooking skills. The **Captain** speaking: *"Ye were cooking for a different crew once. Perhaps ye still yearn to do so. A dish for a duel. A chance to close some old wounds. That'll be your test."* **Toya** immediately connects with what this is all about. First stop **Angler's Grave** and its Angler's Festival currently taking place there.

1f - Toya's Perfection (Ch. 1) at Angler's Grave

Toya must create a meal "so sublime, it will coax a dead legend from the Below." Some **precious ingredients** from the **Angler's Festival** are needed. It's a sunshiny day and the **eldritch meat** growing **on the ribs** of the carcass will be the **first to collect**. **Toya** has to use his **teleporting skills** for cutting the meet and picking it up almost instantly after it has fallen to the ground below, or it will just spoil. Next thing is a **sample of oil** from the **Angler's lantern**. Shoot at it with a cannon, collect it from a **bucket below at the beaches**. Get some **precious spices** from **merchants** and, of course, deal with **all the guards** that might block your way.

9d - Toya's Perfection (Ch. 2) at Calamity Reef

With all he literally has in stock, **Toya** must now test his cooking and blade against the **legendary pirate Sam Bellamy**, first luring him out from beyond the grave on **Calamity Reef** with the dish. The stew will be prepared in an **open air kitchen** set up by **Marley** in broad daylight. It's a time-sensitive process again. Make use of **Toya's teleportation skills**. Lured out **Bellamy** will make you go after **two guards** on the island he possesses in sequence, until finally finding closure in sharing a meal on top of the **Lighthouse**. **Toya's test** completed.



Look at us now. A skeleton and a ghost, sharing a meal over the dying bones of titans.

Sharing the dish

Captain's Test for Pinkus von Presswald

Pinkus finds it a pity seeing the **mirror** with its floating shards in such a state. No use marvelling at his magnificent countenance. The **Captain** asks him whether he remembers that **servant** he had. The one he'd apparently "left" **some place**. His name is or had been **Sebastian** and **Pinkus** had last seen him in **prison** - the dungeons of the **Iron Bay** to be precise. The **crew** sets course to the **isle**, hoping that **Sebastian** is still there.

7c - Pinkus' Duty (Ch. 1) at the Iron Bay

Pinkus is quite occupied playing down the rather unforgivable role he played in leaving **Sebastian** in this **prison for the souls**. The **cell** he remembers him in is empty. First objective is checking the **prison records** to learn about any possible whereabouts. **Peruse Mind** of a **guard** to infiltrate the building where the records are kept and find out. Once the **crew** made its way into the **fortress** to the records, they learn that **Sebastian** is no longer listed as an inmate. But there is that **pile of worldly remains** from "released" prisoners to be checked **outside**. **Sebastian's** soul appears. He had died seven years ago after thirty in prison. Collect his remains and leave for the **Marley**.

8c - Pinkus' Duty (Ch. 2) at Gran Alcázar

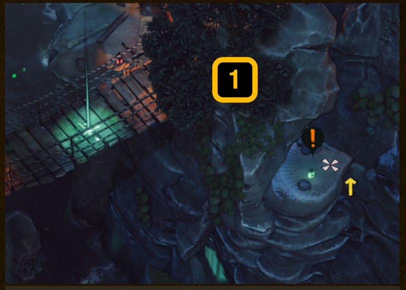
When asked, **Sebastian** longs for a proper burial by the **Maiden's Judgement** at **Gran Alcázar**. The course is set. The burial ceremony needs a proper **Confessor** though, trained to perform the eulogy. There's one taking a stroll in the **gardens**. **Sebastian** think it'd be a good idea to have **Pinkus** peek into the **Confessor's** mind. There's some **"equipment"** to be gathered: **Iron Dust**, an **Iron Slab**, a **Firestarter** for the **beacon**. With all this collected, **Sebastian** will eventually get a decent burial from **Pinkus** himself. But the truly heartfelt words uttered by **Pinkus**, thinking that **Sebastian's** soul had already vanished, will bring actual closure and fulfil this **Captain's Test**.

Captain's Test for John Hughes Mercury

John looks in the **mirror** and sees **Greg** and **George** roam the **Twins of the Nerechtemeresch**. These guys were among the **three from John's old crew** that tied him to an anchor and threw him overboard. If there ever had been unfinished business, it is here. **John** will pay them a visit and he will go alone on a **solo mission**.

6b - John's Revenge (Ch. 1) at the Twins of the Nerechtemeresch

John finds **Greg** and **George** lying around sleeping at **two spots of the Twin's island**. Sends them **both** to the **Below** with his **Anchor**. That way **Marley** brings them **aboard the ship**, where **John** wants them all gathered. But they are in no ordinary sleep. The notorious twins **Nerech** and **Temeresch** are involved. Their spell will last somewhere between 500 years and eternity, but they also have some **remedy** to wake them temporarily. It's been put in a place on **top of the island [1]** where only **John** could get to. Back again at the **Marley**, **John** "revives" the **two lads** and asks where **"she"** is. They seem to know who **"she"** is and say something about a thing they "started" at **Angler's Grave** after their ship Filibuster started falling apart...



Through the Below

1e - John's Revenge (Ch. 2) at Angler's Grave

"She" will be **John's** old **crewmate Rosaline** who was part of the gang that keelhauled him. Ask **Yolanda**, the graveyard keeper, or consult the **Inquisition's immigration register** for eventually finding her at the **"Saucy Sloop"**, the very **Inn** where **Afia** first met **Virgilio**. So that's what the three "started". **John** sends **Rosaline** to the **Below** and **Marley** on the **ship**. United they are for revenge. But **John** merely wants them to sing a particular shanty for him. One that had kept him from becoming mad when endlessly walking along the bottom of the ocean for years. They will sing and dance for closure and forgiveness. **Captain's Test** for **John** fulfilled.

Captain's Test for Gaëlle le Bris

Gaëlle is apparently known for being an avid letter writer and **Mordechai** wants her to take up her "correspondence" again. This makes **Gaëlle** instantly mad about the Captain reading her letters, but will give in for the **test**. **Gaëlle's test** is the only one with three parts **across three islands**. **Calamity Reef** will be the first to visit for finding her **secret stash**...

9c - Gaëlle's Letter (Ch. 1) at Calamity Reef

Some of **Gaëlle's** belongings are stored in a **cannon** on the **Brine Razor's wreck** on **Calamity Reef**. The **crew of three** makes its way through the **Inquisition's guards** to the cannon and fires it for getting the stuff out in the open. Retrieved some other place then are **Gaëlle's** letters that she had chosen to keep. A special correspondence with someone named **Trirou** who is very dear to **Gaëlle**, even though they never met. Afraid to talk about it, **Gaëlle** ended it after dying. Back on the **Marley** she writes a letter of apology for not contacting her.

1d - Gaëlle's Letter (Ch. 2) at Angler's Gave

Gaëlle's letter has to be delivered all the way to France and **Arimtice**, an old acquaintance of her who lives at **Angler's Grave**, might do the job. **Gaëlle** knocks at his **door** and after some catching up and strange "errands" involving the **Kanol**, he is willing to deliver the letter. But **Gaëlle** has to finish it yet. So they agree on meeting again in **New Krucbury** from where **Arimtice** gets his passage. Back on the **Marley**, **Gaëlle** finishes the letter.

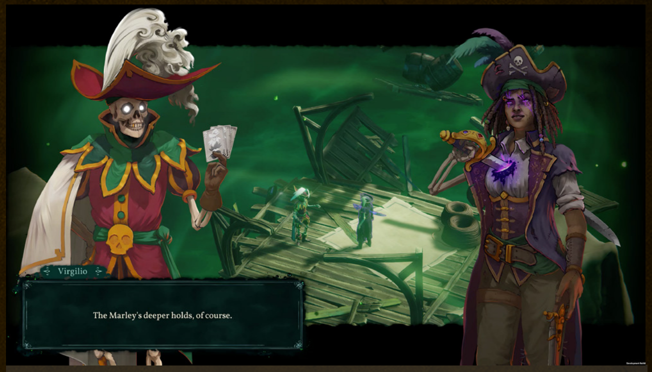
3d - Gaëlle's Letter (Ch. 3) at New Krucbury

Having written the final letter, **Gaëlle** just has to give it to **Arimtice** in this solo **mission**. But he's held by the **Inquisition** for impersonating a **Commissarius**. **Gaëlle** frees and "delivers" him to the ship that's already left the harbor. As she can, she simply shoots him aboard. The letter will certainly be delivered. Closure for **Gaëlle** and her pen pal **Trirou**. **Gaëlle** feeling good. The **Captain's Test** for **Gaëlle** fulfilled.

The Red Marley - Below in the Holds

With **four Captain's Tests completed** and **all members of the original Cursed Crew** revived, you're in for the **final (double) mission**. But before we go into the **great finale** here, we got a bit of catching up to do and recap what happened on the **Marley** in the **third act in between missions**. This will provide important context to what follows...

Virgilio and **Afia** secretly started a thing **on the Marley** that is **about Red Marley**. And it could well be taken as her very own **"Captain's Test"**. It all takes place **below deck in the deeper holds** between **missions of the third act**. We literally go down "memory lane", where you learn a thing or two about **Marley's** past with the **Captain** and the **Cursed Crew**. It is here that we hear about **Mordechai's** wish for them to find his treasure and - surprisingly - send it **back to the Below**. Why's that? Why was this never mentioned by **Marley**? **Marley** always had difficulties accepting her limited capabilities for capturing and unleashing memories. But **Mordechai** deliberately limited these powers to recent memories and restricted them to one island at a time.



Virgilio

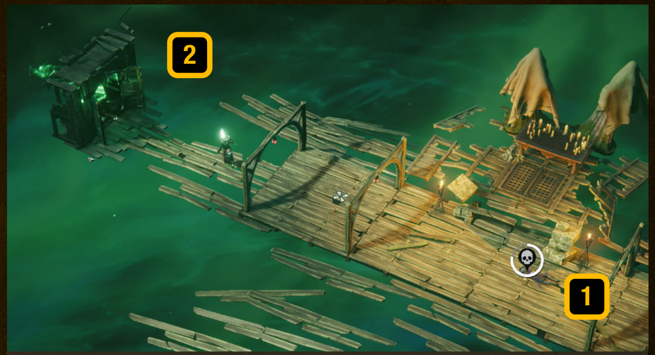
The Marley's deeper holds, of course.

Team Memory

And here's the reason: The power to **control time through memories** came from the **"Time Soul"**, a creature from the deepest **Below**, drawn into the world by the **Curse of Lost Souls**. The **Captain** found it on a **lost island** where he stole a "sliver of the soul", still enough to infuse a **ship** - the **Marley**. And the **Red Marley** was born from this, looking quite a bit like a small **Time Soul**. Then he hid it well. All this explains any heightened interest by the **Inquisition and especially Ignacia** for both the **Marley** and the **Captain's Treasure**. The treasure is more or less the **Time Soul** with its power to bend fundamental laws or reality. Some gold included.

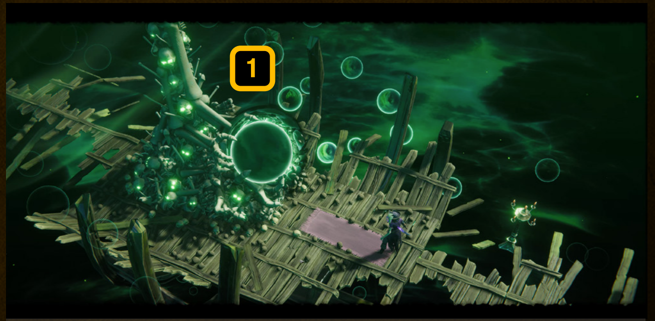
Now, somewhere along the **Captain's Tests**, **Ignacia** already made her comeback move and made **Estelle**, the poor **ship monkey**, carry the **Captain's head** down to the **hold**, where she forced **Marley** into creating a **pathway through the Below**. **Red Marley** simply cannot resist the **Captain's head's** wishes and her inability to let the **Captain** go has made **Marley** vulnerable. **Ignacia** knows that now, will play with it and use this in any way she likes.

Afia will go down by **Ignacia's** power in the **hold [1]**, but get rescued by the **skeleton crew**, after **Ignacia** had already left though the **Tear in the Below [2]**, taking **Mordechai's skull** with her once again.



Ignacia leaving the Marley

With the **fourth Captain's Test completed** by now, **Afia** is led into the **deepest hold** where the **Marley** keeps her most treasured memories and where only the **Captain** ever set foot in. She leads **Afia** to a **shrine holding her very first memory**. Like all memories here, it is one of the **Captain**. **Marley** wants **Afia** to destroy this memory as she cannot fight against herself and every time she thinks of the **Captain** now, she also knows **Ignacia** will win. **Afia** refuses and suggests another plan: **Marley** is better off putting her trust in **Afia** when they find the treasure and face **Ignacia**. After all, she's the navigator and can guide through a storm, right?



The first memory

1a - The Captain's Treasure on Morrow's Reach

Main Goal: All challenges have been met. The final confrontation with **Ignacia** awaits.

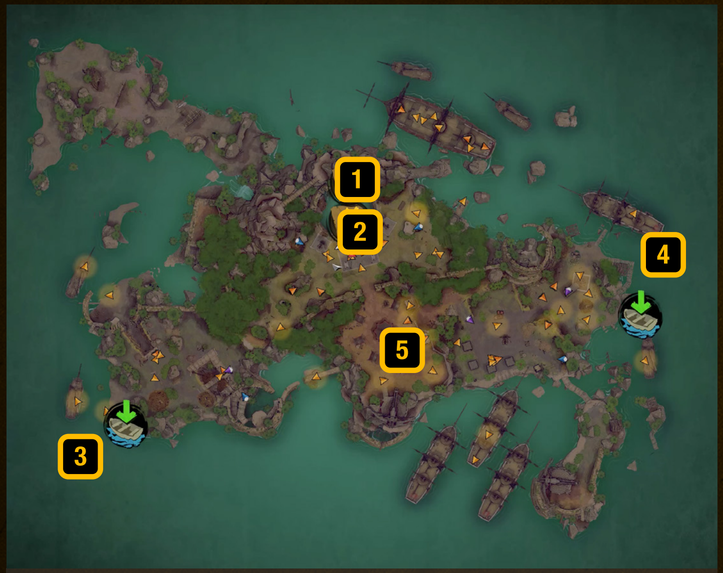
Time of day: Night **Duration:** Medium **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 8 **Required:** **Afia**

Approach the **mirror** with **Afia** and **Mordechai** will reveal that he hid his treasure on **Morrow's Reach**. *"Approach the island, and the mirror will call my treasure from the ether. The rest is up to you."* Thank you very much. The **crew** gathers, everyone with a different idea of what the treasure might be. **Marley** jumps to the briefing telling them that there will be more than gold with an **"ancient primordial soul"** to be found, that has been "bound to the **island** long ago." **Afia** wants the whole **crew** on this **mission**, honoring the **Captain's** last request. This will be your first mission then with **all eight crewmates** aboard, to put an end to **Ignacia's** madness.

The **crew** arrives at **Morrow's Reach** and sees the **island** already filled with heaps of gold. The **mirror** has issued its call. The **Captain's** treasure returns to reality.

Well well! Looks like everyone's here.

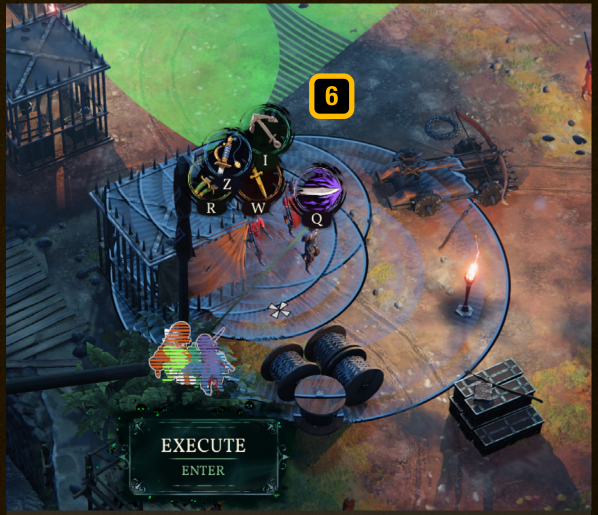
The crew gathers for the finale



Angler's Grave by day

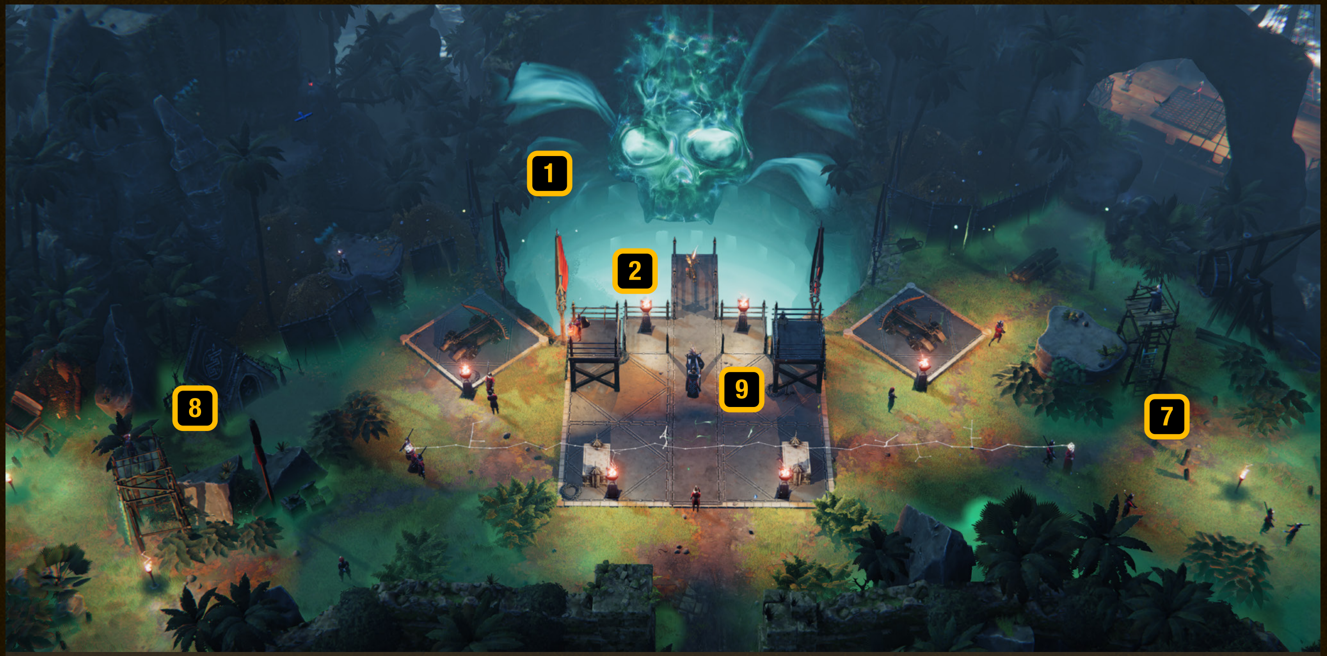
And the **Time Soul [1]** has also appeared with **Ignacia [2]** facing it. She's sure that her Rite will soon put this ancient horror under her command.
Afias plan is to first deal with **Ignacia** and then the **Time Soul**, touch it, let the **Marley** handle the rest. And then grab the treasure. A sound and simple plan looking at the priorities.
Choose any **landing point** - **Mermaid's Landing [3]** to the **west** and **Sunken Harbor [4]** to the **east** - and make your way to **area [5]** that will be your **entry area** to the final show here.

As you might have expected, the management and movement of **all eight crew members** can be challenging. Hard to even fit them all in one normally sized bush. **Move in smaller groups**, **split up**. Or use the **power of them all** at once! Make yourself aware that this is actually a **small army** you're commanding now. It's good to practice **huge coordinated strikes in Shadow Mode** like **in [6]** for later. Also remember that each of them has **Flintlock Pistols**. Try taking out next to **whole camps** of **guards** in single strikes. **Ignacia** knows that you're coming after her anyway.



Taking out a patrol of five guards

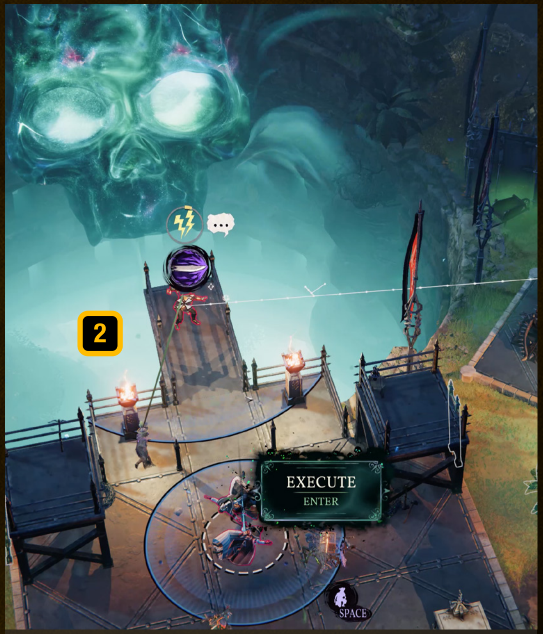
Once you made it through **all the setups** leading up to the **entrance for the main area** with **Ignacia** and the **Time Soul**, investigate the symmetrical layout of this "viewcone puzzle". The goal here is, of course, to get **to the middle part** with **Ignacia at [2]**, who confidently turns her back on us. **Strategies of "distract-isolate-reduce"** will work as usual, and it's up to you whether you **split up the crew** for dealing with the **eastern part [7] and western part [8]**. Or you could just clear both parts one after the other with the **whole crew**. For both plans you start again as far in the back as the **Acolytes** will allow. Take out as many of them as necessary. Then work your way to the **guards on the watchtowers**. Do all that until you reached a point where **viewcones will overlap** for the **middle part**. The **Kindred** play a central role here as usual, automatically linking both parts with their presence and special properties.



The whole symmetry on display

It will all take you some time and when you've **reduced** it all to the **middle part** with only the **two Prognosticars** other than **Ignacia** remaining, you take them out in the usual manner and free your way to **Ignacia** who is still occupied in conducting her **Rite**. You take her out in the same manner as a **Prognosticar**. But she won't be impressed too much by her own demise, will speak to you through the **Captain's skull** and unleashes a memory. She's once again very much able to do that. **Marley** tries to intervene but won't manage. Another try and this time **Marley** will "refuse": "No! You are not the Captain. The Captain is..." - Yeah, he's gone. **Afia** jumps in saying that **Mordechai** predicted this situation and made sure **Marley** wouldn't face it alone. **Ignacia** miscalculated the situation. Unleashing yet another memory fails for her.

With **Ignacia** gone, it's time to touch the **Time Soul** then. When **Marley** attempts to send it back to the **darkest depths of the Below** however, she is tempted too much by the power at hands: *"Time Soul. Let my dream encompass the world. Bring back a memory of happier times. Let me see my Captain again."* But there's a mix-up of memories unfortunately...



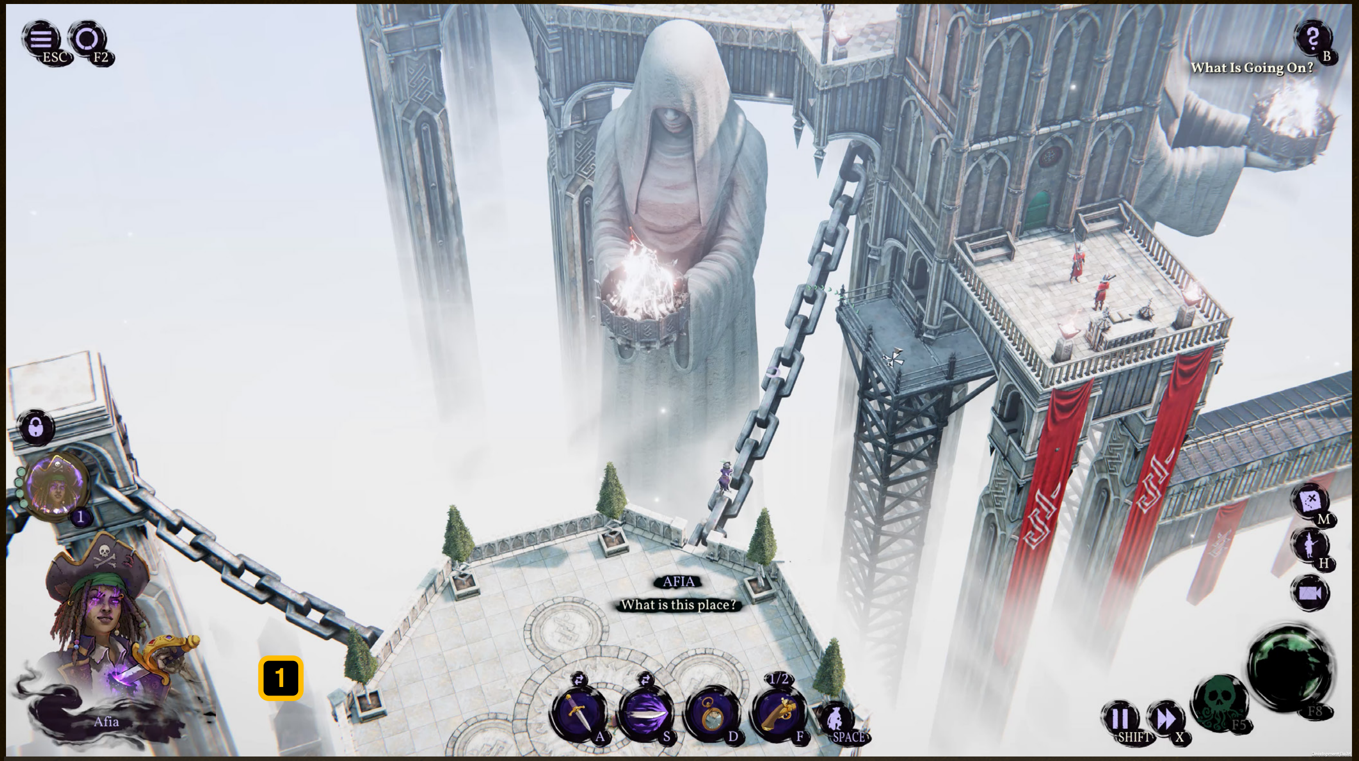
A second try

10a - Measure Is Unceasing in the Memory of the Grand Design

Main Goal: The world has been rewritten. Free the crew. Find Ignacia. End this nightmare.

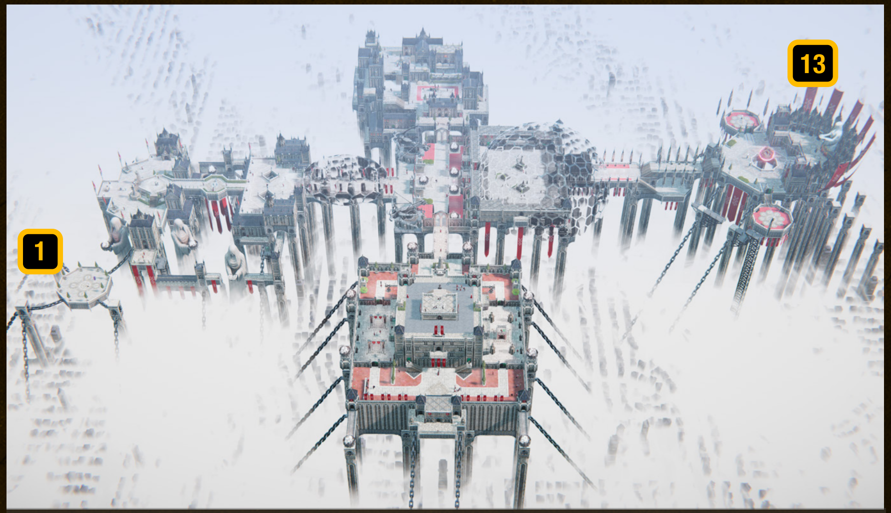
Time of day: Day **Duration:** Long **Vigor Boost:** 3 **Crew Size:** 8

But "unfortunately" is a kind of mixed statement here. Without the wrong memory "loaded", you wouldn't have seen the **"Memory of the Grand Design"**...



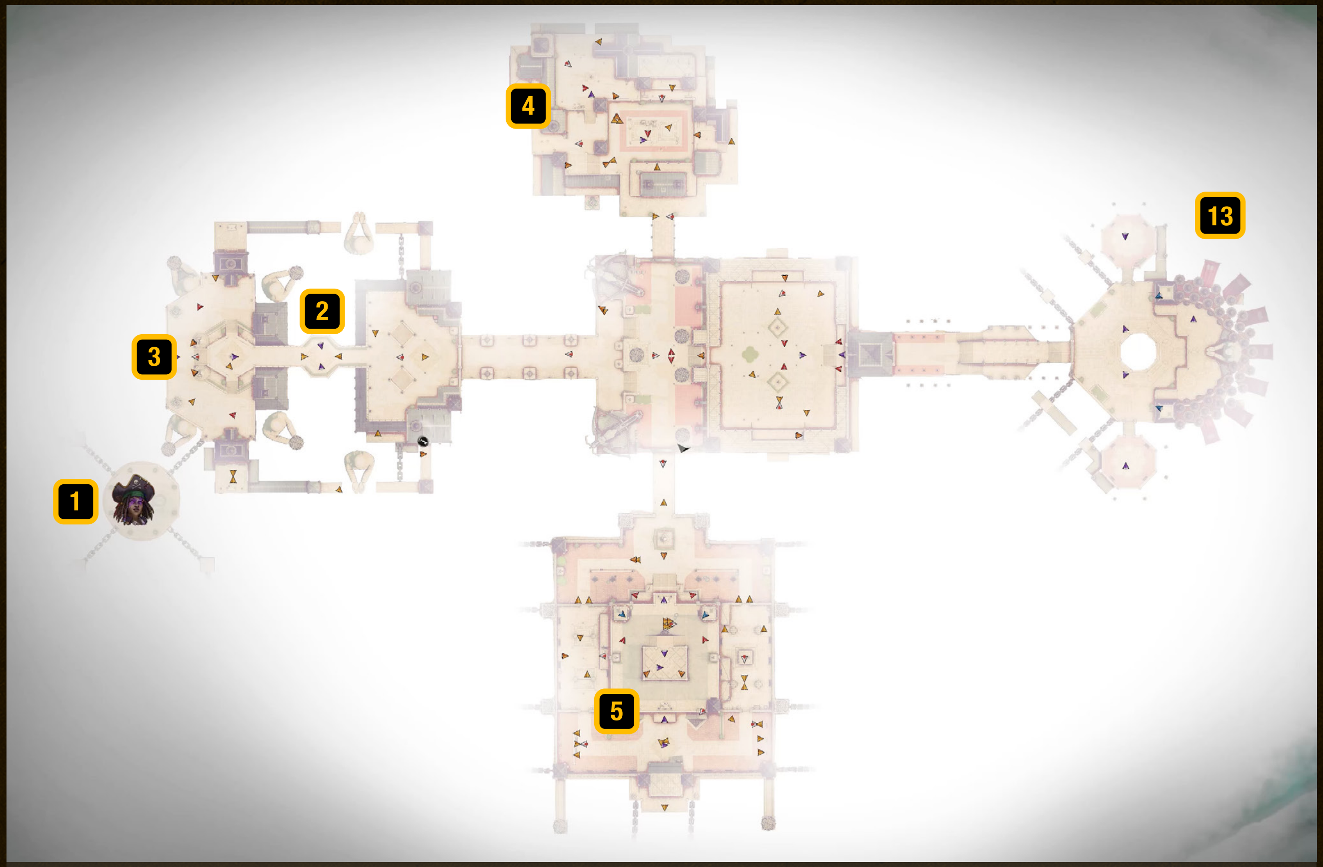
"What is this place?"

Afia literally lands in this enigmatic space, Virgilio arriving a second before her. He's now unconscious - probably. Last thing he said before blacking out was that he had shielded Afia from the worst: *"I've played recklessly this time... Now it's all on you. Win the game for us, Signora... and I'll see you up ahead."* Afia wonders what this place is and you probably ask the same question. One thing for sure: It's massive. But the crew is not. You will find and collect your crewmates however at this place. They have all been captured by the Inquisition. Let's get going...

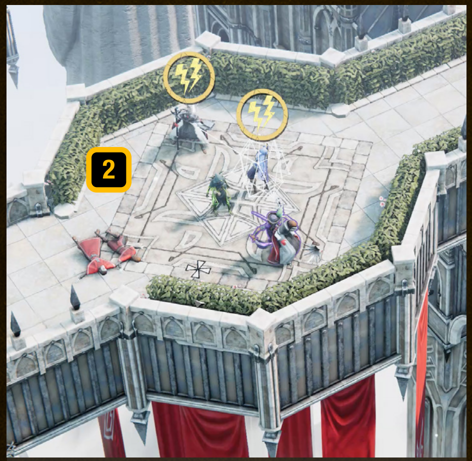


A guide-exclusive view of the Grand Design

Ignacia is present in this place, hearing her voice and Fate's Hammer time and again. She will reset your progress a first time early on unleashing a memory. A second time Marley intervenes. She's also here, but where you cannot tell. Suleidy and Toya are visibly held captured **at [2]** though. In the **Mensurarium** and this will be the first you rescue from the Prognosticars' clutches.



A massive map

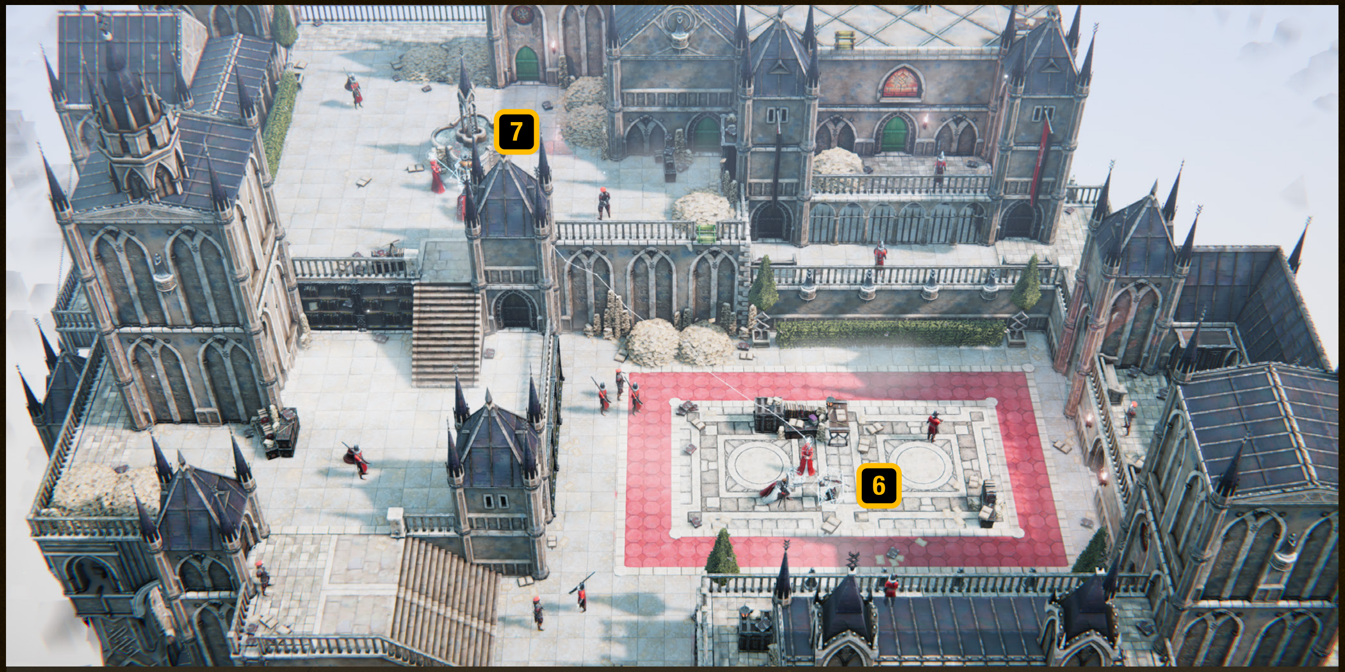


Freeing Toya and Suleidy

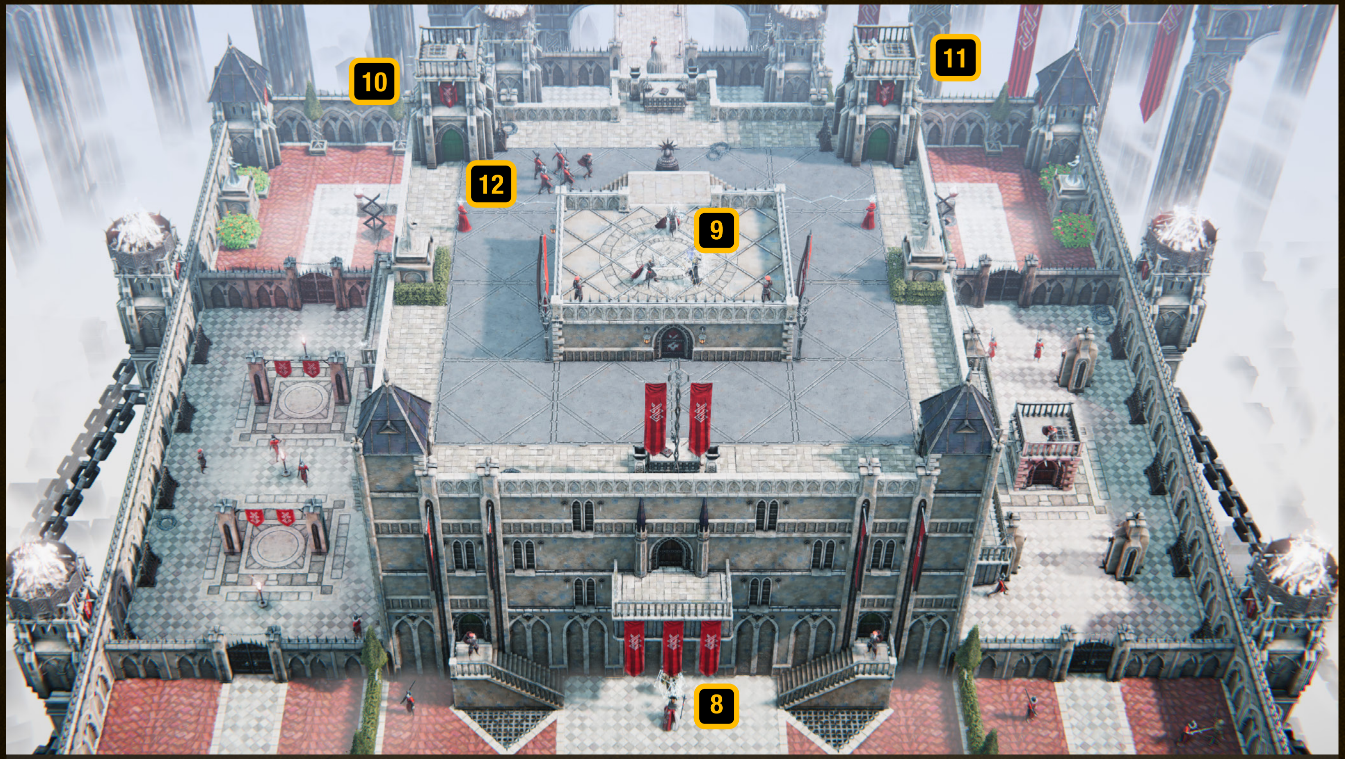
Afia's Time Freeze, Blink and a hedge are good enough to get the Acolytes right out of the way. Attack each agitated Prognosticar individually for freeing both Suleidy and Toya. A small alarm won't matter in case it should happen. Once freed, Suleidy utters the theory that Ignacia tricked Marley into using the Time Soul's power with a forged memory. The whole world has been rewritten, but the crew is still in it, held by a small thread and the Marley.

With this first rescue, your skill repertoire just tripled and you're up two crewmates for a well-known team of three, on their way to free more members of the crew. Next is John, also held in the **Mensurarium at [3]**. Freeing all members of the crew implies getting through some intricate setups of guards. The more crewmates at a spot, the **more** you have **to do** for rescue. Now and again Ignacia will be heard saying *"Measure has been taken. The world was found wanting"*, and you will likely be reset to the **starting point [1]**. But the group will stick together with Marley able to "remember".

You will eventually manage to free Teresa and Gaëlle from the **Calcularium at [4]**, Quentin and Pinkus from the **Rectificarium at [5]**, Pinkus held on the very top of the building there. All of these rescues come with guard setups and arenas that are easily a match with any of the climactic points from past missions.



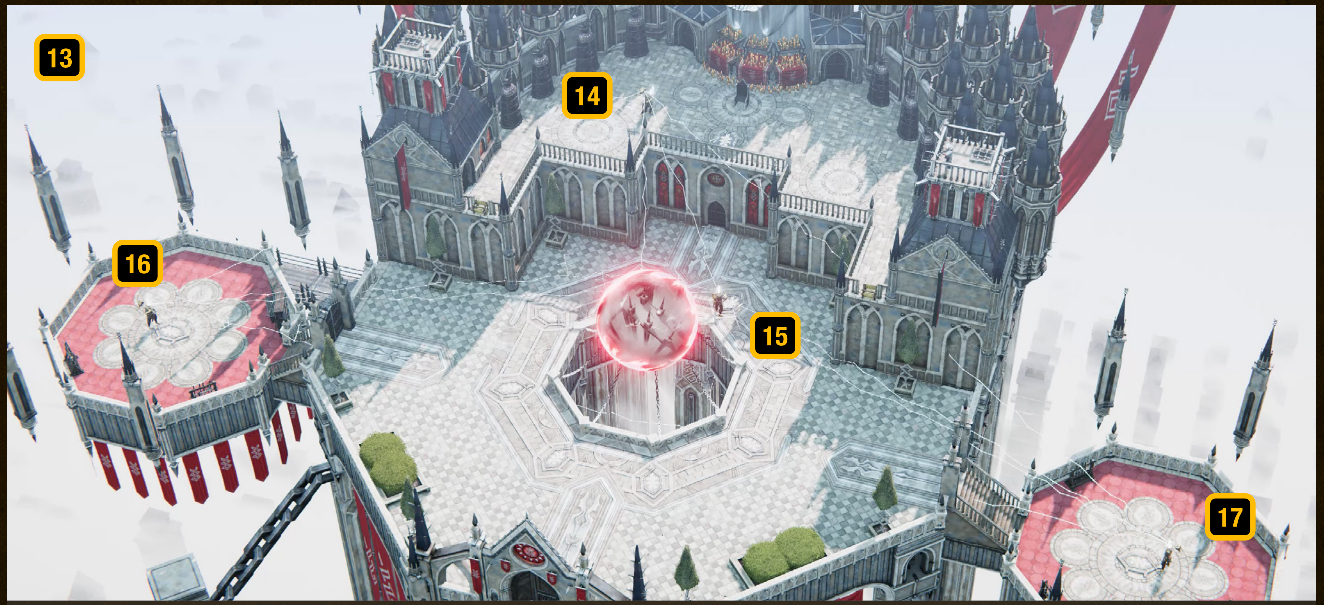
The Calculatorium [4] with Teresa at [6] and Gaëlle at [7]



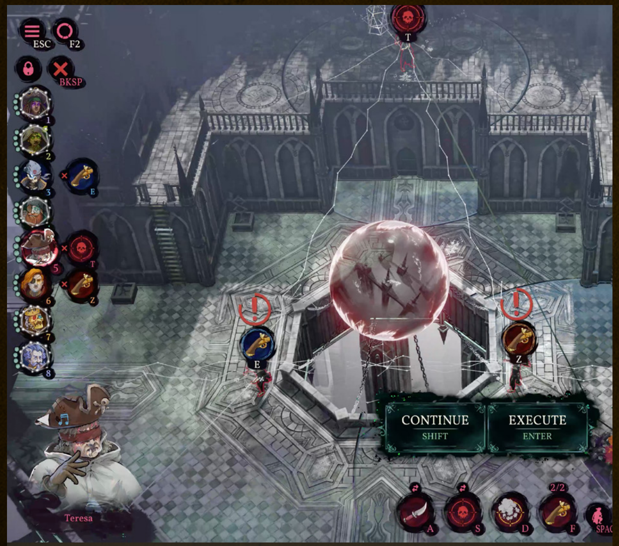
The Rectificarium [5] with Quentin at [8] and Pinkus at [9]

Each **area** in this **weird and beautiful place** can be quite intimidating, but nothing that a good **practice of “distract-isolate-reduce”** won’t accomplish eventually. Having a **team of six** when you arrive at the **Rectificarium [5]** gives you definitely something to work with. Draw from the whole experience of **past missions** when you see **ludex guards on watchtowers** like **at [10]** and **[11]** for instance. Or remember how you’ve dealt with the **patrol of five** on **Morrow’s Reach** recently when you see the one marching **at [12]**.

Once you have the **whole crew** and go after **Ignacia** - sincerely for the **last time** - you get the real sense of completion and achievement. It is honestly true that this *will be* the last time going after her. But there will actually be **five of her** just waiting for our arrival at her **sanctuary [13]**. **Marley** has cleared the path by now, but you still have to overcome the **guards** on your way yourself. Once you’ve arrive at the **sanctuary [13]**, restock your **Flintlock Pistol bullets** from the **crates right at the sanctuary**. Also take the hint that these **well placed resources** might come in handy for the final battle. And a battle it is! Taking out the **Ignacia Quintuple** at once in a short time-frame time requires **three stages of coordinated action** that you both plan, set up and pause with **Shadow Mode**, not wasting a single second. The **whole setup** is incredibly tight: One **Ignacia** is in the **back on higher grounds [14]**. **Two** are located close to the **memory kept in the middle [15]**. **The three** will change position in their respective areas with each strike of the **Fate’s Hammers**. Happens every thirty seconds. **Two more** are (statically) **located on lower grounds at [16] and [17]**. You have to send **two crewmates** down, avoiding the **stairs** by sneaking on **hidden paths for each**. All **Ignacias** are all linked to each other like **Kindred**, signifying that you have to **take them all out at approximately the same time**.



The Ignacia Quintuple in her sanctuary

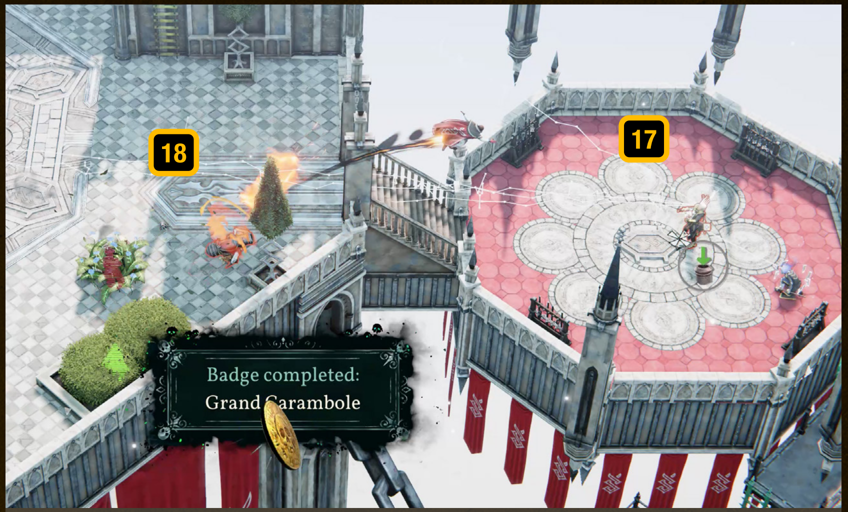


Setting up stage 2 in Shadow Mode

Needless to say that **“distract-isolate-reduce” won’t work** here. You have to get **all five Ignacias** “agitated” at **first stage**. Hide **five crewmates** in the **bushes** and sneak one **crewmate** up to the **Ignacia** on **[14]**. Hide that one well **behind the doors**. Then shoot **all five Ignacias** with your **Flintlock Pistols**, using the **first bullet**. Don’t do this with **Teresa** as her **Iron Judgement** is highly valuable in the second stage. Once agitated, the **Ignacias** will be vulnerable like any **Prognosticar**. With this, you will now have **three crewmates** still available for action and you still have to **take out the five at the same time**. Almost that is. Watch the timers above their heads.

Here’s what you do **second stage**: Shoot again with **Flintlock Pistols**, using the **second bullet**. Let **Teresa** shoot **Ignacia at [14]**. This kills the **first three** and all has to happen ***superfast*** now. Immediately hit pause. Let your **crewmate at [14]** collect **Teresa’s** soul in case you have her **Iron Judgement upgrade**.

All your crewmates, except the two still frozen down at [16] and [17], will be available for the final two moves at **third stage** now: Ranged attacks with Teresa's Iron Judgement and Gaëlle's Fire Kanol are literally your best "shot", if you manage to get them in range in the set time frame. And Gaëlle still has a spare body in her Kanol for shooting as seen in [18]. Your freed crewmate has to finish the merely unconscious body though. All very time-critical. Toya's Shadow Step teleportation is another great option, but you have to place the Katashiro first on either Ignacia at [16] or [17] in preparation before stage one commences.



Badge completed:
Grand Carambole

Stage 3 of the final battle

If you were able to manage all of this - likely not on first try - a final memory of the **Grand Design** will be unleashed, transporting the crew and Ignacia, now "single" again, into a glaring void. She puts on display that she's far more capable than any ordinary Prognosticar, turning each attack from the crew into freezing them in place. It's Marley coming to the final rescue, freeing the crew from Ignacia's clutches to put an end to her once and for all.

No ordinary Prognosticar

Marley to the final rescue

Afia's promotion celebrated

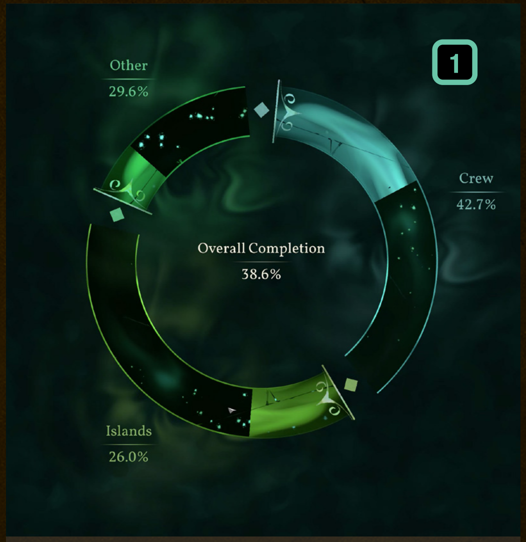
"The real world only exists in memory now, and none of us can remember it all", Marley says with all standing in front of the Time Soul again. Only the Time Soul can bring back the real world now. Marley uses its power one more time with the crew being her "anchor".

And this is it. The world is restored to what it was. You head back to the Marley. No Tear for an exit needed this time. Ignacia had tied her soul to that twisted dream of hers. She was destroyed with it, Marley tells Afia. The Time Soul returned to the depths of the Below. Mordechai's wish is fulfilled and Afia will be the new Captain of the Marley. And ***for*** the Marley. You've reached the endgame...

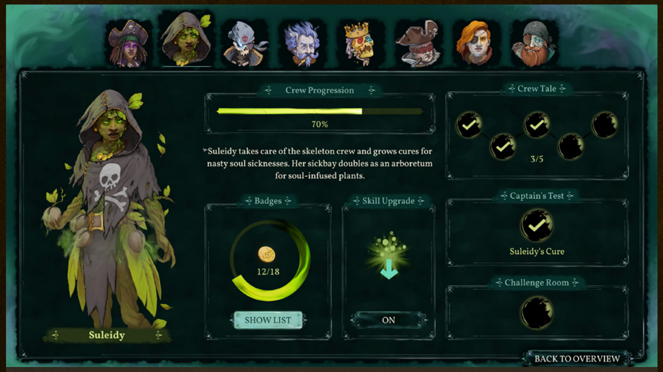
Endgame Content

"Captain, there are a few thing we have to discuss, when you have the time", Marley says. Together with the Time Soul, the rest of the Captain's treasure had disappeared as well. The good news right after you've watched the credits roll: Faint traces of the Captain's gold appeared all across the Timeless Shores. However, it is now not only hidden in the present but also in the past. With Marley's expanded time-manipulating powers, previous adventures can now be revisited, without fear of changing the present.

So here's the deal for you: With the story of "Shadow Gambit: The Cursed Crew" finished, you probably have as little as 30-40% completion, depending for instance on how many Crew Tales you've played on the Marley among many other things. Don't be shocked by this relatively low number that you can check in the Logbook [1]. Increase that number by playing all the remaining Captain's Tests for good boost. Play missions again by now selecting them all from the map table. Pure Gold from the Captain's treasure now: All of the game's Badges have been revealed! These are **types of special challenges** that you can complete. You can check them all out in the Logbook, too. There are Badges for *every* character, mission, location and more. There's a lot waiting still to be discovered and explored. And you probably have unfinished business on many islands yourself, things on your personal "to do" list, like completing a mission from a different landing spot, with different characters etc. Many such things will add to completion percentage. Check all the lists for Challenges and Badges for guidance or be surprised, when you involuntarily unlock (or fail) one without knowing.

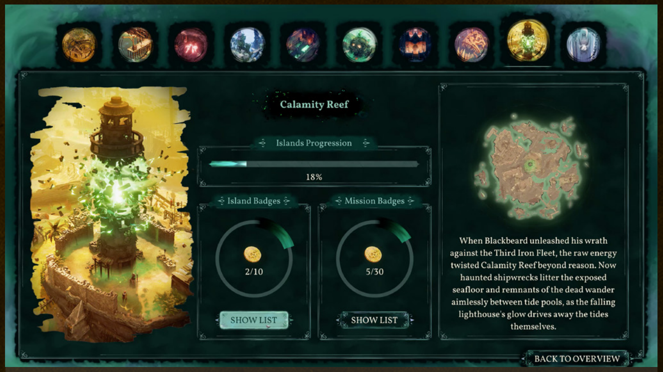


Typical completion for endgame



Suleidy takes care of the skeleton crew and grows cures for nasty soul sicknesses. Her sickbay doubles as an arboretum for soul-infused plants.

Suleidy's Progression Sheet



When Blackbeard unleashed his wrath against the Third Iron Fleet, the raw energy twisted Calamity Reef beyond reason. Now haunted shipwrecks litter the exposed seafloor and remnants of the dead wander aimlessly between tide pools, as the falling lighthouse's glow drives away the tides themselves.

Island Progression for Calamity Reef

And if playing the game to completion alone won't motivate you already enough, we've got a **huge surprise** for you in stock: The great Virgilio can be unlocked as a playable member of the crew eventually! All you need is an overall completion of 85%. The mysterious figure of the Trickster will be able perform on a single skill: mimic the abilities of other members of the crew. How this will work exactly will be kept secret and revealed once you actually revive him as the ninth crewmate yourself...

Thank you so much for **playing our game and reading this guide**. Hope you enjoy both journeys across the Timeless Shores - be it in parallel or separately. Let us know in our Discord!